

Campfire Cooking Another World with My Absurd Skill

Grilled Entrails and the
Festival of Gluttony



Author: **Ren Eguchi**
Illustration: **Masa**

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■ Ninrir ■

■ Kisharle ■

"She got
fat again
in a single
month...
Even her
cheeks
are sooo
plump."

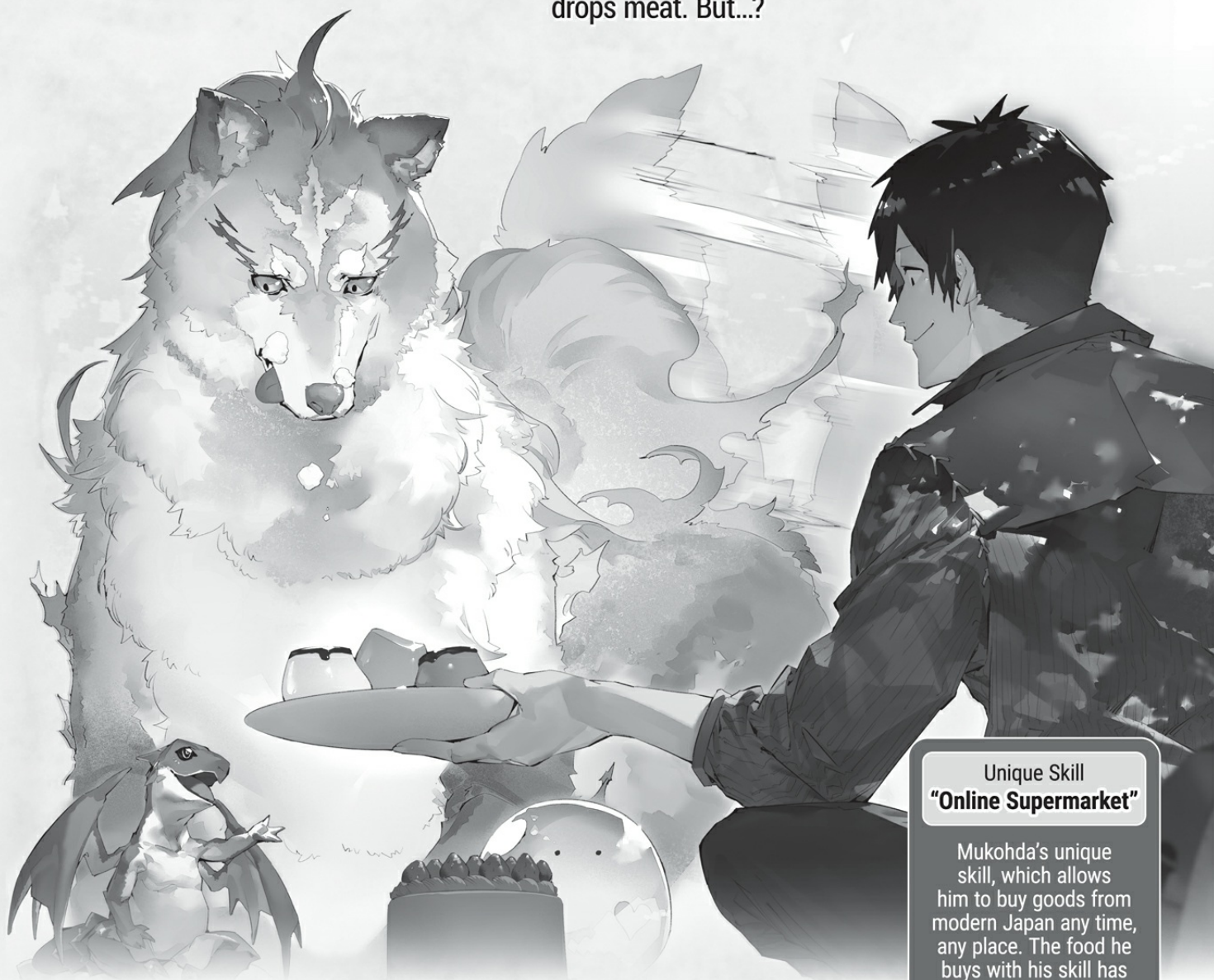


The Story Up Till Now



Accidentally caught in a “Hero Summoning” by a shady kingdom, Tsuyoshi Mukouda (Mukohda), a salaryman in modern Japan, was brought into another world of swords and magic. Somehow, Mukohda managed to leave the kingdom and go on a journey, but thanks to his unique skill, “Online Supermarket,” which allows him to buy things from his world, he was beset by incredible beings like “Goddesses” and “Legendary Beasts” all giving him things like familiar contracts and blessings in order to get at his food and otherworld goods.

While relaxing and enjoying his life in Karelina with his new house (a huge mansion), Mukohda was forced to go to yet another dungeon by Fel and the others. So, leaving the house to his slaves who had completely opened up to him, Mukohda leaves for the town of Rosenthal and the so-called, “Meat dungeon,” which pretty much only drops meat. But...?



Unique Skill “Online Supermarket”

Mukohda’s unique skill, which allows him to buy goods from modern Japan any time, any place. The food he buys with his skill has buffing effects.

Character Introduction

Mukohda's Party



Dora-chan

Familiar

A rare pixie dragon. He's small, but fully grown. Of course, he became Mukohda's familiar because he's after the man's cooking.



Sui

Familiar

A newly born slime. It grew attached to Mukohda, who fed it, and became his familiar. Cute.



Fel

Familiar

A legendary magic beast, the Fenrir. He formed a contract and became Mukohda's familiar in order to get at his food. Hates vegetables.



Mukohda

Human

A salaryman summoned from modern Japan. Has the unique skill, "Online Supermarket." Good at cooking. A coward.

The Divine Realm



Rusalka

God

The Goddess of Water. Gave Mukohda's familiar, Sui, her blessing so that she could receive offerings from Mukohda. Loves otherworld food.



Kisharle

God

The Goddess of Earth. Gave Mukohda her blessing so she could receive his offerings. She's entranced by the effect of otherworld beauty products.



Agni

God

The Goddess of Fire. Gave Mukohda her blessing so that she could get offerings from him. Likes otherworld alcohol, especially beer.



Ninrir

God

The Goddess of Wind. Gave Mukohda her blessing in order to extort offerings from him. She's weak to otherworld sweets, especially dorayaki.

◀ Proceed





It's Time to Depart in Search of Delicious Meat	Chapter 1	+
We Got Entrails as a Drop!	Chapter 2	+
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The Three Heroes ~Marveil Capital Chapter~	Gossip	+
Meat Dungeon Festival	Chapter 5	+
Let's Go Home	Chapter 6	+
The Children Half a Year Later	Gossip	+
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Salty Dog	Extra	+

◀ Proceed



7	×	Chapters
2	×	Gossip
1	×	Extra

Chapter 1: It's Time to Depart in Search of Delicious Meat

"This place is really lively..." I couldn't help but mutter as I took in the voices coming from the line of stalls that were calling for customers.

We'd safely arrived at the town of Rosenthal.

It had taken us 12 days, a little longer than expected since we kept getting sidetracked (mainly so my three familiars could go hunting and let off steam). I'd been told that by carriage, the trip from Karelina to Rosenthal would take around a month, so 12 days was still plenty fast though.

Before we left, the guildmaster for Karelina's Adventurer's guild said to me, "I'll tell Rosenthal's guild about you, so when you get there make sure you check in." So I went to the guild first thing, and Rosenthal's guildmaster (he looked like a really kind and pudgy middle-aged man, perfect for the guildmaster of a town with the meat dungeon) was waiting for me with an incredible welcome planned.

Apparently I was the first S-ranked adventurer to come in years.

He was rubbing his hands together as he told me right off the bat that there was a request he'd like me to take care of, but since I'd just arrived and hadn't even decided where to stay, I had to ask him to talk to me about it later.

After the Adventurer's guild, I went to the Merchant's guild and rented a house as usual. The one I got this time was an 8LDK that used to belong to a retired high ranking adventurer. It was close to the center of town, and it was also close to the meat dungeon's entrance, so it was a good property.

With my living situation settled, we decided to go out on the town since there was still daylight left. And boy, the market was exactly what I'd expect out of the meat dungeon town. There were tons of stalls out, with people everywhere advertising their offerings and trying to attract customers, and I could smell and hear cooking meat from every direction. Given that, Fel and Dora-chan were

looking around all over the place, and even Sui was out of its usual bag and doing the same on Fel's back.

"Hey bro, you look cool! Come try our meat! It's delicious, we use a secret sauce~!" An older guy who was grilling skewers in a stall called out to me.

The guy was real confident, but the savory smell coming off his grill backed it up.

《**Hey.**》 Then came Fel's telepathy.

"You want to eat this, right?"

《**Indeed.**》 Fel's eyes were glinting predatorily and they were locked on to the skewers the old guy was cooking; it was obvious.

Wait, Fel, you're drooling. You too, Dora-chan.

Sui was also jiggling excitedly on top of Fel's back.

"Then, would ten skewers for each of you, so 30 skewers in total, be fine?"

《**Mm, I want more.**》

"You don't want to try out any other stalls?"

《**Of course I do. But only ten skewers from here will not even tide me over.**》

Then I guess 20 each for Fel and Sui, and ten for Dora-chan? The little dragon wouldn't have room for other stalls if he ate more than that.

"Then give me 50 skewers, please."

"Oh, 50?! Sure thing! 50 skewers will be 3 silver. I've only got 30 skewers ready, so please wait a little and I'll get the other 20 grilled up real quick!" I handed 3 silver to the guy and took the 30 skewers that were ready.

All three of my familiars were staring intently at the skewers I had in hand.

"Sorry, can I borrow some space behind your cart?"

"Sure, go ahead." There was some empty space behind the guy's cart that would be perfect, so I made use of it to feed Fel and the others.

I removed the skewers and served the meat to the three of them in their bowls, and they greedily chowed down.

“So you’re feeding it to your familiars. You sure treat them nice.”

“They work hard, after all. I can at least give them good food.”

“Hahaha! You’re a good master, aren’t you bro?”

“It’d be nice if they think so. Ah, can I get one more skewer?”

“Sure thing. Here. It’s fresh off the grill. You bought a lot so this one’s on me.”

“Wow, thanks!” He also gave me the other 20 skewers that he’d just finished, and I served them to Fel and Sui.

Then, I bit into my own savory-smelling skewer.

“So good!” I had no idea how he made it, but the sauce was similar to BBQ sauce, and the large amount of meat had the perfect texture. Every time I bit into the succulent, fatty meat, the juices flowed freely into my mouth.

“Right?! They’re my pride and joy!” The guy replied happily after my amazed shout.

《**Indeed. These are quite delicious.**》

《Yeah. Charcoal-grilled meat really is amazing!》

《It was great!》 All three of my familiars quickly and easily finished off the meat, as if it wasn’t even a snack to them.

“You guys eat so fast.”

《**Hmph, I am nowhere near full. I can eat more.**》

《Me too.》

《Sui can eat more too.》

“Yeah, yeah, I know.”

《**Still, what kind of meat is this? I believe this is my first time eating it...**》

《Hm? Isn’t this orc?》 Dora-chan thought it was orc, which had been my assumption. It tasted like pork, so I figured it had to be.

《**No, this is not orc. I feel like the fat is lighter than an orc’s.**》 *Is it?* Now that he mentioned it, I thought that Fel might be right.

But what kind of meat has Fel not tried yet? I looked down at my half-eaten skewer. *At times like this it's fastest to just ask.*

"Sorry, what kind of meat is this?"

"This? It's dungeon pork. It's something you can only get from the meat dungeon, you know! Well, if you go down to the middle floors they drop like crazy though. Gahaha!"

Ohh~? So something like that exists. That's some good info.

"In this town it's not that rare, but it looks like this is your first time here, bro, so there's a bunch of different dungeon pork dishes for you to try! This is the only place where you can eat fresh dungeon pork, after all!"

Fel, after hearing what the old guy said, muttered with blazingly motivated eyes, **"Ohh?"**

He's totally gonna grind the shit outta that dungeon. He might end up causing a shortage for a while because all the dungeon pork'll be gone... There's other adventurers to think about too. I'll try to hold him back so it doesn't come to that, but as for how well I'll be able to...

We left the guy's stall behind and continued exploring the row of food stalls.

Just as he claimed, there were lots of stalls selling all sorts of dishes using dungeon pork. It was probably a really popular meat around here since it could be obtained in large amounts from the dungeon. There was a place that sold dungeon pork sausages, and one that served steak too, but skewers were the most popular.

As the title of 'holy land of food' implied, each store had their own styles and methods for bringing out flavor.

The kinds of skewers ranged from those seasoned with simple herb salts to the ones marinated in full-on secret sauces like the old guy from before had. Each stall researched and developed its own flavor and used anything from pot herbs to salt-based sauces. I was surprised at how many more varieties there were in this town compared to others. It was like it existed in a different world of cuisine.

There were a lot of actual restaurants too, and all of them were diligently furthering the town's food culture.

And then you had a bunch of stalls using beef from the dungeons, too. Just like dungeon pork, dungeon beef couldn't be found anywhere else. Apparently it appeared on a lower level than dungeon pork, but it was still quite common so it was just as popular in this town as the pork.

As for the flavor, it tasted like imported beef. It seemed like it'd be good in a stew or something. My familiars said they liked the dungeon pork better, but we still decided to get at least some beef.

After all, getting meat drops from the dungeon meant that I wouldn't have to get anything butchered, so I wanted to get as large a variety of meat when we went in as I could.

Just like that, we managed to fill ourselves up while obtaining info on the dungeon.



“Hm, the meat you cook really is the best I have ever tasted.”

《Yeah. The meat from those stalls yesterday wasn't bad, but yours is way better. The sauce on this meat just hits different.》

《Master—, the meat is super delicious~!》It wasn't like I was competing with the stalls from yesterday, but I did decide on some yakiniku rice bowls following the principle, “simple is best.”

All I did was grill up a load of bloody horn-bull meat and coated it with a little store-bought sauce before putting it on top of some freshly steamed rice. I also topped the bowl with some white sesame seeds and an egg yolk. It was a really simple bowl, but it was delicious.

You said the sauce hits different, Dora-chan? Of course it does. It's the flavor that Japanese food companies have spent decades researching and perfecting.

I was using a long-selling flavor of sauce that was my personal favorite.

I'd tried all sorts of sauces, but I always felt this one had the best balance of flavors.

“Yeah, it really is scrumptious.” I was chowing down on a rice bowl along with my familiars.

While I felt like meat first thing in the morning wasn’t proper, a part of me did want to say it was fine once in a while. *I’m being influenced by Fel and the others, aren’t I? Still, this is really good.*

After everyone had their fill of the hearty, heavy, and solid yakiniku rice bowls, we decided to hurry and get into the dungeon.

My familiars all surprisingly really liked the dungeon pork and dungeon beef we tried yesterday, so of course they wanted to rush into the dungeon to get some.

Even though we just arrived yesterday...

Though we’d decided to go to the dungeon, I convinced them to head to the Adventurer’s guild first.

I figured that I should at least report that I was going in beforehand, and I did remember that the guildmaster, Giannino, had a request for us.



Rosenthal’s Adventurer’s guild was bustling right from the morning.

When I first entered along with Fel and Dora-chan (Sui was, of course, in my bag), the entire place went silent for a moment before quickly regaining its bustle.

I thought to go to a service window first, but the employees must have been told to alert the guildmaster when I arrived, since Giannino quickly came jogging towards us, his chubby body jiggling as he went.

“Thank you for coming so early, Mukohda. Now, let’s go to my room.” Led by Giannino, we went to the guildmaster’s room on the second floor.

“Now please, take a seat.” Urged on by Giannino, I took a seat across from him.

“This guild’s really busy for the morning, isn’t it? I don’t know why, but there were a lot of children around too.” For some reason, there was a gaggle of brats that looked to be around ten years old.

“Oh, those are children from the orphanage.” Apparently there was a system unique to this town wherein the children from the orphanage who were going to be adventurers when they grew up were allowed to train on the first floor of the dungeon only.

“Well, that’s just an excuse. Basically it allows them to secure their own food.” According to Giannino, orphans were gathered here in Rosenthal since it was the most prosperous town in the area, so the orphanage was pretty much always full to overflowing.

In order to compensate, the orphanage received more funding than normal, but the budget was still tight and management was having problems.

But the lord of this land couldn’t just be spending all his funds on helping orphans, so as a last resort he put the limited permission system out for the children.

“The difficulty of this dungeon isn’t that high, which is what makes all this possible. ...Well, the system does have issues sometimes.” The potential earnings a person could expect out of the dungeon here was lower than what could be expected from a harder dungeon, but in return as long as you didn’t go lower than the 10th floor out of the dungeon’s total 12, there wasn’t much danger of dying unless you got really unlucky.

On top of that, the drop items were basically all meat, so there was no danger of running out of food, which meant that almost all the adventurers who stuck around in this town were less wealthy, lower-ranked ones.

“The more ambitious adventurers all leave the dungeon behind quickly, and the higher-ranked adventurers prefer more profitable dungeons too. So in the end the only ones who remain are the adventurers who are fine with a modest profit as long as it’s safe...” Of all the active adventurers in this town, it seemed that the highest-ranked party was C-rank, and on top of that party being the only C-rank party in Rosenthal, all the members had families and so wanted to avoid danger.

And that led to the current situation where nobody had bothered to go lower than the 10th floor in a long, long time.

But the lower a person went, the better the drops were...

“The Merchant’s guild is really putting the pressure on, telling us to get something from the lowest floors.” While the current status quo wasn’t a problem for your average diner or stall, apparently a lot of the fancier inns and restaurants bought up meat from the lowest floors for limited-time menus, so for them it was quite the opposite.

Especially since there were a lot of nobles and other rich people who liked to come for said limited menus, it seemed.

“I see. And that’s where we come in.”

“Yes. As you’ve probably already guessed, my request for you, Mukohda, is to please secure some meat from the lowest floors.”

“That’s totally fine with me since I’m planning to go into the dungeon anyway, but what kind of meat can we get from there?” Hearing that the meat in question was used for special menus that attracted the rich, my interest was naturally piqued.

“You know of the dungeon beef and dungeon pork that can only be dropped from here, right?”

“Yes. They’re on the middle floors, right?”

“The 10th and 11th floors have a higher version of that.” According to Giannino, the 10th floor had the higher version of dungeon pork, and the 11th was for the higher version of dungeon beef. And these higher forms of beef and pork were not to be underestimated.

From what I heard out of Giannino, not only were the monsters that dropped this meat twice as big as the ones that produced the regular dungeon beef and pork, they were much more aggressive as well.

Their tackling and stomping attacks that made use of that extra mass were worthy of caution, and even high ranking adventurers wouldn’t get off scot-free if they ate one of them.

But both of the meats were delicious and apparently widely known for being better than B-ranked bloody horn-bull or meat from higher-evolved orcs.

“And on the last floor, the 12th?”

“The 12th floor contains both. The number of those monsters also goes up, so it requires even more caution. Also...” It wasn’t clear what the rate was, but special individuals popped up sometimes too, it seemed.

I was told that the special individuals of the dungeon pig and dungeon cow’s higher forms had both their size and aggressiveness maxed out.

On top of that, they were far faster than their size might suggest, which made them hard to deal with.

But their meat was both soft and fatty, and they were extremely delicious.

《**Right, then let us go hunt that meat right now!**》

《Meat! Meat! Let’s get lots of meat!》

《Meat~!》 My familiars, who had up until now been staying quiet in a corner, were suddenly up in arms with a dangerous glint in their eyes after hearing Giannino’s speech.

They must have gotten restless after hearing about such delicious meat, judging from the way the three of them were fidgeting and pacing around.

“You guys...” *Wow, would it kill you to just wait a minute? Look, Giannino’s all surprised since you guys started moving around so suddenly.* “It looks like they just can’t sit still after hearing about the meat. Haha!”

“If the great Fenrir is so motivated then it seems like everything will work out. I’m counting on you.”

“Understood. Then, we’ll be going into the dungeon now.” We left the Adventurer’s guild and headed for the meat dungeon, where great food awaited us.

Chapter 2: We Got Entrails as a Drop!

The first floor of the meat dungeon.

“What tranquil scenery...” The first floor of the meat dungeon was a wide grassland.

Though from what I heard, all the floors in the dungeon looked like this, the only difference between them was the monsters that appeared.

I was riding on Fel’s back as we moved through the floor.

There were a total of four teleportation circles that connected the first floor to the second, and we were heading for the farthest one. We decided on going for the farthest because I’d been told that the closest ones to the entrance had lines of adventurers waiting to go down. So we decided that rather than wait in a line, it’d be better to take in the scenery of the dungeon while going for an empty circle, especially since it wouldn’t take long riding on top of Fel.

The monsters that appeared on this floor were white sheep and big rabbits. White sheep dropped intestines, and big rabbits dropped their meat and fur. Apparently getting the fur from big rabbits was considered a terrible drop.

Here and there I could see herds of white sheep munching on grass and big rabbits hopping around.

“They’re straight up just sheep and rabbits, aren’t they? Though they’re a little bigger than normal.” The white sheep looked about 1.5 times bigger than a normal sheep, and the big rabbits seemed like they might even be twice as big as a normal rabbit.

The white sheep and big rabbits on this floor wouldn’t attack unless you got too close or bothered them first, or so I’d heard. I did think, *Then they’re just regular animals!* But they really were monsters, since they’d turn ferocious once you set them off.

Still, pretty much no adventurers of even an average level were active on this floor. On top of there being little profit to be made here, the meat from the

white sheep was gamey and hard to handle, and big rabbit meat was tough. Neither of those meats were even close to delicious.

Instead of adventurers, this floor was occupied by the little tykes from the orphanage. There were even some girls amongst them, though they were few and far between. I watched them in action as they slowly separated a white sheep from its herd without it noticing before jumping it and beating it up through sheer numbers. They weren't strong enough to take on an entire herd, so this was a pretty clever solution in my opinion. The weapons the boys and girls were using were basically small clubs, which seemed quite brave of them to me.

As I was watching these children in action from the side during our trip to the teleportation point, I heard a scream.

"Kyaaaahhhh!!!"

"W-WAAAAHHH!!!!"

"Susanna!! Geraldo!!" There was a girl who had fallen on her back, a boy who was trying to stand her up, a white sheep that was charging at them, and a bunch of other boys who could only watch.

"Dora-chan!"

《Oh fine.》 I called on Dora-chan, who boasted the most mobility, to help. While he didn't seem too enthused about it, he still got to work quickly.

Dora-chan let loose some ice magic.

"Meeehhh..." An icicle that was smaller than the ones I usually saw flew and hit the wild sheep directly in the head, causing the monster to fall lifelessly in front of the children.

"Heeyy, you guys all right?" I got off of Fel's back with a grunt of effort and called out to the children, and they looked over at me with surprised expressions still on their faces.

"Waaaggh! I-It's a huge wolf! A-And a small dragon!" The first one to react and shout something was one of the boys.

"Ah, the wolf and dragon here are my familiars, so don't worry about them."

“Huh? Familiar... Are you a tamer, old man?” *O-Old man.....? I-I’m not old.
Not old at all! I’m still in my 20’s!*



“That’s right. Also, I’m not an old man. I’m still in my 20’s. Call me big bro.”

“Why? You’re an old man so why shouldn’t I call you one?”

“You’re wrong, kid. People in their 20’s are still young. Call me big bro, got it?”

“Fiiine.”

Fel, Dora-chan, you stop laughing.

“Ah, thanks for rescuing my friends, big bro!” The boy who called me an old man looked like the leader of this group. When he spoke, the other kids who’d gotten back up and regrouped all chorused, “Thanks!”

They wouldn’t die just from a white sheep’s tackle, but they’d still be sent flying and become unable to move for two or three days afterward.

If they got hit in the wrong place, the sheep could even break bones, so the kids thanked me since I really did save them.

“You guys sure have it tough.”

“We usually do pretty good, actually. Susanna did mess up today, though.” The leader kid said as he looked at the girl who was apparently Susanna.

“Teehee, I tripped.”

“Geraldo, if you’re gonna try and save the girl you like, you should be faster about it,” the leader kid said, causing the other one named Geraldo to turn bright red and go, “Wha-?!”

Ah, to be young again.

“Here you go, big bro. The drops are yours.” The leader kid handed over the drops from the white sheep I just saved them from.

“No, I don’t need it. We’re going for meat further down. You all can keep it.”

“Huh? Really?”

“Yeah,” I said, and the girls and boys all cheered.

“That means we won’t have to go back empty-handed.”

“Yeah. They’re all waiting for us, too.” I asked them about it, and they told me that the food they caught here went straight to their dinner table.

The children from the orphanage all waited for the results of their hunting on this floor every day.

“It’s hard, but I hear that we have it better here than a lot of other orphanages.”

Well, that’s probably true. Just the fact that they’re able to eat meat every day means they’re pretty lucky.

“But even though the meat goes to everyone at the orphanage, the director says that we can sell everything else to buy stuff for ourselves, so it’s worth it.”

“Yeah. We can save up money to buy weapons for when we become adventurers!”

I see. So while the meat is for the orphanage, the kids can use everything else freely. Sounds like the orphanage director in this town is pretty nice.

“Still, your familiars are really strong, aren’t they...” The leader kid said while looking at Dora-chan.

“That huge wolf looks strong too.” The kid looked up at Fel, who was several times bigger than he was.

“Yeah.” *Yep. He’s stronger than me, his master, as well.*

“This is the first time I’ve ever seen a tamer, and you’re really strong. Can I become a tamer?”

“Stuuuupid. Tamers need to have an affinity for it. You can’t just become one because you want to.”

“Y-You don’t know if I have an affinity or not!”

“Ahh, fine, fine. Don’t fight.”

“Shh! Everyone, look at that.” The leader kid suddenly seemed serious as he pointed at something: a larger than normal chicken that looked like a broiler.

“It’s a wild chicken!”

“Wooaahh, we’re super lucky today, aren’t we!” The boys whispered to each other.

“Let’s surround it while making sure it doesn’t notice us.”

“““““Okay.””””” With practiced movements, the kids quietly surrounded the bird that was apparently called a wild chicken.

Then...

“Now!!” *Rustle rustle*

The leader kid shouted the signal, and all the other kids jumped out at once.

“Raaaggh!!” “Eeiii!!” “Yaahhh!!” “Haagghh!!” “Oraaaa!!” Bang! Snap! Clong! Clang! Bong!

The chicken didn’t even have time to fight back as the kids all used their clubs to gang up on it.

“Cluck cluck...” The chicken only managed a small death cry.

While I felt bad for the bird, there was nothing else for it.

This was a dungeon, after all.

“YEEAAHHH! We got meat!”

“I heard that only white sheep and big rabbits appeared here. I guess that wasn’t everything though,” I commented to them.

“Actually, this wild chicken is from the 2nd floor, big bro. Sometimes one gets ‘lost’ and ends up on the 1st floor like this. You know, this thing’s delicious and not gamey at all!” The kids were all making a fuss about the feast they were going to have.

They’re so pure, acting like that even though they’ll only get a little of the chicken after it’s split between everyone. Okay. Let’s help them a little then.

I’d been concerned about their clubs for a while now.

“Hey, do you guys all only have those clubs?”

“Yeah. It’s cuz we don’t have any money to buy weapons. So we just picked out some pieces of firewood that seemed solid and tough. They still break sometimes though, so we do carry spares.”

So these were all originally firewood...

“I’ll make it a bit better for you. Let me see it?”

“Hm? Sure, but whadda you mean by better?”

“Oh. I’m just going to make it harder and easier to grip. I’m not going to be the one doing this, though... Sui, wake up.” I shook the bag that was hanging from my shoulder a little.

《Hmmm~? Masterrrr, what’s up?》Sui slowly got out of the bag.

“This is my familiar, Sui the slime.” I introduced Sui to the kids.

“Sui can do all sorts of things... Can you make this club like this so it’s easier to hold, and suck out all the water so it’s harder?” I drew a picture on a pad I had on me to show Sui.

《Okay, that’s easy! Sui will try!》I handed over the leader kid’s club to Sui.

《Masteerrr, it’s done!》It didn’t even take a minute to finish the wooden bat.

“Ohh, thanks, Sui.” I gave it a test swing and it felt nice.

As expected from a Sui work.

“Here. It’s harder and easier to hold now, so it should be better than what you had before.”

“Ohhh~!” I handed the weapon back to the leader kid, and he immediately started swinging it around.

“This is great! It’s easier to hold so I can swing as hard as I can! Thanks, big bro!” After seeing what happened with the leader kid, the others started crowding me, all saying, “Me too! Me too!”

“Ahh, just calm down everyone. I’ll do the same for all of you, so get in line.” I had Sui improve all their clubs in order.

“Ohhh! Amazing! It’s so easy to swing!”

“Yeah! That means I can hit things as hard as I can!”

“It always felt like it’d fly out of my hands, but now I don’t have to worry about that!”

“Yeah, now we can hit things as hard as we can!” The kids were all swinging their bats around happily.

“This should help you a little. Work hard!”

“““““Thanks, big bro!”“““““ I saw the kids off before resuming my journey to the teleportation point.



The 2nd floor was also a wide-open grassland.

The monsters that appeared on this floor were wild chickens and horn rabbits.

I could see new adventurers walking around here and there.

Our aim was the evolved dungeon pigs and dungeon cows from the lower floors, so we were passing through this one.

I had heard that there were also four teleportation circles on this floor, so we once again headed for the farthest circle.

No matter which circle you used, you always ended up at the same place, so apparently the closest ones were always crowded with adventurers.

I had a peek at the closest circle on our way to the farthest, and the line was long and snaking.

Since I had Fel, the distance to the teleportation circle didn't really matter for me, but if I had to walk to our destination it'd likely take hours.

Since the drop items from this dungeon were pretty much all raw meat, it was common to only make day trips into the dungeon, so the crowding among the nearest teleportation circles was supposed to be near constant. That being the case, I was told that the crowding went on until the 8th floor, which was where most of the adventurers hunted.

There wasn't anything really of note on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th floors, so we just passed through.

Then, there was the 6th floor.

That was the floor for dungeon pork.

Since the town had a high demand for dungeon pork, there were a lot of adventurers here.

“So that’s a dungeon pig. They’re pretty hefty.” Dungeon pigs had sharp tusks poking out of their lower jaw and light brown hair. They were also very round.

“What should we do? Want to hunt some?”

《**We can probably just kill whatever we happen to pass by. Our real aim is their higher form, after all.**》

《Yeah. The evolved ones taste better, too. If we’re going to go hunting, we should be going for the better stuff anyway.》

《Sui is fine with anything. But delicious meat is better.》

So I guess we’re focusing on the more delicious evolved forms.

“Then let’s just hunt whatever we come across on the way to the teleportation circle.”

《**Indeed.**》



As we traveled towards the teleportation circle, a herd of dungeon pigs appeared ahead of us.

“**Mm.**” *slash slash slash*

““““““Oooooiinkkk!”““““““ The screams of the dungeon pigs echoed across the grasslands.

“Oh.....” Wind blades flew and sliced the dungeon pigs apart.

“Is that your wind magic, Fel?”

《**Indeed. They were in the way, so why not?**》

To all you pigs who were decimated on a whim, I feel for you. You were just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

“I guess let’s just pick up the meat for now.”

《**Quite.**》 There were over 20 dungeon pigs, and they’d all turned into meat.

“It’s nice that every monster killed in this dungeon always drops something.” Each chunk of meat that dropped was neatly wrapped in leaves.

And inside...

“This... it’s the intestine! Whoohoo, that means I can make chitterling hot pot and chitterling stew! It’s even good grilled~... Oh man, I’m looking forward to this.” When I shouted after picking up the intestines, Fel and the others came over.

《**Hm, what happened?**》

“It’s intestines! Intestines! These are delicious~!”

《Are they? Then Sui wants some!》

《**Intestines? Hmmm, but after having your cooking...**》

《Yeah... Intestines are really funky, right? They aren’t inedible, but after getting used to your cooking I can’t even consider eating them...》

“But they’re really good once they’ve been properly cooked. And fresh entrails aren’t funky at all. I swear they’re really good,” I insisted, but Fel and Dora-chan were still only half convinced, saying things like, “Really?” and “That stuff?”

“Well fine, I’ll just make something delicious with it anyway. You’re gonna be so surprised when you eat them. Also, if intestines get dropped here then they might also be dropped on the next floor with the dungeon cows too, as well as even farther down with the higher forms. We’ll be able to get lots of fresh guts so you’re all just going to be missing out if you won’t even try them.” If I managed to get a lot of entrails from dungeon pigs and dungeon cows, that’d open up a lot of cooking options for me.

It might be nice to have some chitterling hot pot for the first time in a long while with the intestines from a dungeon cow’s higher form.

I continued to pick up drops while imagining all the different dishes I could make when my surroundings started getting noisy.

“Hm?” I looked around and saw a ring of adventurers surrounding us.

“Hey, he’s a tamer, right?”

“That’s rare.”

“I know him. He’s an S-ranked tamer.”

“S-ranked?!”

“From what I heard, he conquered the dungeons in both Dolan and Aveling.”

“If that’s true, he’s amazing.”

“But, if he’s going to be hunting like that, there won’t be any left for us.”

“Yeah.”

“Even though they do pop back up eventually, that won’t be until at least the next day.” The gazes of the adventurers *hurt*.

S-Sorry. You guys are right.

I immediately gave up on hunting any more on this level that had lots of adventurers and decided to move on quickly.

So we took the teleportation circle to the 7th floor, where dungeon cows were.

Of course, there were a lot of adventurers here as well.

In order to avoid unnecessary friction with other adventurers, we decided to pass by this floor as well, so we quickly made for the teleportation circle to get to the 8th floor.

The 8th floor had both dungeon cows and dungeon pigs.

Compared to the 6th and 7th floors, there were slightly fewer adventurers about, but there were still quite a number of them working diligently. So once again, we decided to pass through the floor.

Then, we made it to the 9th floor.

The 9th floor had cockatrices, which often made their way into our meals.

And finally the number of adventurers had lessened greatly.

“We eat cockatrices a lot, but they’re C-ranked monsters, aren’t they?”
Thanks to Fel and the others constantly obtaining good meat I almost forgot that fact. But to normal people, the orc and cockatrice meat that I used constantly was good meat that you’d have to splurge for.

“Let’s get some cockatrice here.”

《**Yes, their meat is serviceable.**》

《Right. These things make for decent karaage.》

《Karaage~!》 My familiars scattered.

Then, before even ten minutes had passed, my surroundings were nothing but meat chunks...

“Stop! STOOOP! That’s enough! Enough already!”

《**Mm? Already?**》

《What, why?》

《Masteeerrr, is this really enough?》

“It’s more than enough. It’s gonna be tough having to pick all this up, you know?” Just a quick count had the total already over 30 meat chunks.

Wait... Ahhh! The other adventurers nearby are all shocked!

“Okay everyone, after we collect all the meat we’re going to the next floor.” I had everyone help me collect the cockatrice meat before we headed for the next teleportation circle.

The next floor would be our goal. We’d finally be at the 10th floor.

Everything from the 10th floor on would be our hunting grounds.

Let’s start off by hunting as much dungeon pork as we can!



On the 10th floor———.

Just as I’d heard, the 10th floor was basically devoid of other adventurers. From far away, I could see the huge bodies of the evolved dungeon pigs either lying down or munching on grass.

“All of you, there’s no need to hold back from here on out.”

《**Yes, I know. Our aim is the higher form’s delicious meat, correct?**》 Fel’s eyes glinted as he tracked an evolved dungeon pig.

《Let’s hunt our hearts out!》

《Sui will get lots of delicious meat!》Dora-chan and Sui were also fully motivated.

“Then I’ll just concentrate on picking everything up, so do your best,” I said, and my familiars scattered.

“I *was* told that the higher forms are twice as big as regular dungeon pigs, but they really are huge...” The evolved dungeon pigs were so huge they looked imposing even from a distance.

While I was talking to myself, the death cries of dungeon pigs started sounding off all around me.

“Ooiiiiinkkkk!” “Oi-Oiiiiinkk!” “Oink! OOiiiiinnnkkk!” ...*Looks like things are going well.*

“Now then, I should get to work too.” First, I worked my way towards Fel, who was hunting down dungeon pigs with wild abandon. Wherever he passed through, the ground was littered with dungeon pig meat chunks.

I diligently worked to pick up every single one.

Meanwhile, Fel was finding new herds of dungeon pigs with great accuracy and hunting them down one after the other. After finding a herd of evolved dungeon pigs, he’d charge into the group. Fel’s hunting style was both simple and highly effective.

He would swing a front leg towards a dungeon pig. That was the sign he was using his original skill, Rending Claws. By gathering magic power in his claws and releasing it, he could create a slashing attack that would fly through the air and cut apart his enemies. It was a ridiculous skill, capable of decimating an entire herd of dungeon pigs with a single use before he moved on to the next.

“He’s killing them so quickly I can’t catch up...” I couldn’t help but complain as I fell farther and farther behind Fel, who kept turning entire herds into meat faster than I could collect them.

“Ahh! He’s so far ahead already!” Fel was already far away, killing yet another herd.

“Oh, whatever. I’ll just leave Fel’s for later, let’s go try to pick up Dora-chan

and Sui's kills." I decided to collect the fruits of Dora-chan's and Sui's efforts, since they were closer.

Let's start with Dora-chan.

He was also hunting entire herds using ice magic. Pointed pillars of ice floated in the air before raining down on the dungeon pigs.

"Ooiink!" "Oi-Oiiink!" "Oink!" The dungeon pigs that got skewered by the pillars of ice screamed before falling over, their huge bodies thudding loudly on the ground.

"Looks like Dora-chan's doing well too."

《Well, of course! Right, next. Gonna keep getting as much meat as I can!》
Dora-chan said before heading for the next herd.

I diligently picked up the chunks of meat he left behind. And there were intestines mixed in too, of course. Then I went over to where Sui was.

Sui was also happily killing dungeon pigs by the herd.

It used its specialty, Acid Bullet, to turn the dungeon pigs into chunks of meat.

Pew pew pew pew pew

Sui's shots were both accurate and precise, and the dungeon pigs screamed before falling over without resistance.

"That's awesome, Sui!"

《Heheheh~, is Sui awesome? But there's still lots more to hunt! Sui won't lose to Uncle Fel and Dora-chan!》

"I see!"

《Masteeerrr, Sui's gonna go beat even more pigs~!》

"Sure! Be careful, got it?"

《Okaayyy!》 Sui said before leaving for the next herd of dungeon pigs.

I started diligently picking up the meat chunks Sui left behind.

"Whew, there's really no end to this. Well, at least I'm getting lots of good meat out of it, so I'll just have to pull my socks up." I continued picking up

chunks of meat one after the other as soon as I found one.

Then, an hour later———...

“Agghh, my waist hurts.” I’d been bending over to pick up meat this entire time and it was starting to take a toll. I tried to stretch my aches away for a bit.

“I picked up a lot, but...” When I looked around, the ground was still littered with chunks of meat.

“The amount of meat chunks in my Item Box is already in the triple digits, too...” Giannino said that he’d like ten chunks each of dungeon beef and dungeon pork if possible.

Even considering that, I had more than enough.

“Wait, no way...” I know I said there was no need to hold back, but there is a limit to everything. I think they know that, right? I’ve got a bad feeling... No, they’ve got to realize there’s a limit. They’ve got to.

While that ran its way through my mind, I heard my familiar’s voices from behind me.

《**Hey, I am done.**》

《We hunted so much!》

《Sui got loooooots of meat!》

I slowly turned around, and I could imagine every joint in my body creaking like a rusted clockwork doll.

“Finished? What do you mean?”

《**Finished hunting the dungeon pigs, of course.**》

《We got every last one! Didn’t we?》

《Yep! There’s loots and loooooooots of meat!》

.....

Every last one... So much meat...

I looked around the 10th floor’s grasslands.

...None. I see no dungeon pigs anywhere.

“YOU GUYYS YOU KILLED TOO MANNYYYYYYY!”





“Whew~, finally done collecting all of it. That was awful.”

《**You are the one who said there was no need to hold back.**》

《Yeah!》

《Sui thought it was okay to get lots of meat...》

“Okay, I guess I did say that... But there’s limits, right? Killing literally every single thing on this floor is going too far!” I had everyone help me pick meat up using the magic bag, and the final count of dungeon pork was almost 400 pieces.

It actually took longer to pick everything up than to kill the monsters that dropped it.

“I picked it all up since leaving it would be a waste, but make sure to moderate yourselves on the next floor. If we want more we can always come back. We just got here, after all.” *I already paid a week’s worth of rent on the house too, and I might still decide to extend that.*

《**Mrr, fine.**》

《Sure, sure.》

《Okayyy!》

“Then, let’s go to the 11th floor.”

《**Wait. Food is first.**》

《Agreed. I’m getting hungry!》

《Sui’s also hungry~!》

True, now that they mention it. We dove into the dungeon early in the day, and getting through the floors took some time...

“All right then, let’s eat.” *Now then, what should I make? The 11th and 12th floors are waiting after this meal, so I can’t take too long... I actually really want to cook these intestines, but it takes a while to prepare them... So...*

I took out some chunks of meat that were dropped on this floor.

The dungeon pork's layers of red meat and fat were clearly defined, and the meat as a whole was just beautiful. It looked like really delectable belly meat.

The entrails that dropped on this floor were always in their own packages, so I appraised the other drops, wondering if they were all separated into different cuts, and they were. I had shoulder, shoulder roast, loin, fillet, belly, and thighs.

This really is a meat-specialized dungeon.

The first thing to come to mind was a stir-fry.

Belly meat's really good for stir-fry, too.

But I was feeling pretty tired from collecting all the meat, so the dish I chose, which would also help recover some stamina, was.....

"Yeah, it's gotta be pork kimchi stir-fry. I have rice ready in my Item Box too, so actually, I should make it a pork kimchi rice bowl." With that decided, I had to buy ingredients with my skill.

The most important thing was kimchi with Chinese cabbage. Then I needed onions, spring onion shoots, garlic, sesame oil, and hot spring eggs.

As for spices, I didn't really need anything I didn't already have.

First, slice the dungeon pork belly into thin, bite-sized pieces before seasoning with sake, salt, and pepper.

Next, mince the garlic, vertically slice the onions into thin pieces, and cut the spring onion shoots into small pieces.

If the Chinese cabbage kimchi is too big or chunky, cut it down to size.

Then all that's left is to stir-fry it all together in a frying pan. To do that, oil up the frying pan with the sesame oil and immediately add in the minced garlic. Once the garlic has started to release some fragrance, add in the dungeon pork belly. Once the meat changes color, add in the thinly sliced onions and continue to cook. When the onions wilt, add in the Chinese cabbage kimchi and stir so the kimchi blends with everything.

Lastly, add mentsuyu and mayonnaise to the mix to round out the flavor and continue to cook for a little longer to finish it. Adding mayonnaise makes the kimchi's spiciness milder and deepens the flavor.

And that should also allow Sui to enjoy the dish too.

“I’ll just pile up some fresh, steamy rice straight out of the pot, then layer on lots of pork and kimchi...” Ohh! It already looks delicious, and this isn’t even its final form!

I put the hot spring egg right in the middle of the pork and kimchi bowl, then sprinkled some spring onion shoots on top.

“Great, it’s finished! Fel, Dora-ch-...” They were already on standby right behind me; I didn’t even have to call for them.

They were all drooling, too.

“Here.” I served the food to my familiars, and they started scarfing it down like they’d been waiting for this food their entire lives.

《**Mrr, this spiciness carries a unique flavor to it. This is pretty addictive.**》

《Yeah. It’s the kind of flavor that always has me wanting another bite.》

《It’s a little spicy, but Sui can stand it! It’s delicious!》 I was a little wary about using kimchi since it was a bit pungent, but it seemed to have gone over fairly well.

That’s great. It’s been a while since I’ve had kimchi. I should dig in too.

I stuffed my mouth with the pork and kimchi.

Yeah, kimchi really does go great with rice. The dungeon pork is incredibly good, too.

The combination of fat and red meat goodness from the dungeon pork belly had a very good, savory taste that didn’t get overwhelmed by the strength of the kimchi’s flavor. And the kimchi’s spiciness was mellowed out by the mayonnaise too, so it was much easier to eat.

This really stirs the appetite.

《**Hey, I want more.**》

《Me too.》

《Sui wants more too!》

“Ahh, sure, sure. Just wait a second.” I served my familiars another helping of pork kimchi rice bowl.

Once everyone had their fill, we were ready to move on to the 11th floor, where the evolved dungeon cows resided.

Just you wait, dungeon cows!



On the 11th floor.

The giant, black evolved dungeon cows could be seen here and there, chewing on grass.

Dungeon cows looked exactly like black wagyu cows, except they were an entire size category larger. And the evolved forms on this floor were double that size and even had horns to complete the picture.

“I thought the evolved dungeon pigs on the 10th floor were big, but these cows take the cake.”

《**Indeed. I do not know how much meat we will be able to get out of them, but it looks like they are quite plentiful, and delicious, to boot.**》Fel’s eyes were once again glinting as he gazed at the dungeon cows.

He’s totally ready to go on a spree...

《Meat! Meat!! I’m gonna hunt my heart out here too!》

《Tasty meat, delicious meat~!》Dora-chan and Sui both seemed like they’d charge into the dungeon cows at any moment.

“Ahhh, I’m going to repeat this. Make sure you moderate yourselves, everyone. Remember that. Also...” I took the magic bag out of my Item Box.

“I’ll give this to you, Fel.” I hung the magic bag from Fel’s neck.

“Once you’ve got a decent amount, put it in the magic bag and just hand the bag to me.” Although everyone replied affirmatively, they didn’t seem to actually be listening. The dungeon cows already had their full attention.

《**Okay. Dora, Sui, let us go!**》

《You got it!》

《Sui will get lots of meat!》 At Fel's signal, my familiars all scattered.

“Moderate yourselves! You hear?!” I repeated myself once again before my familiars got too far.

After a moment, I could hear the screams of dungeon cows in the air.

“Mmoooooooo!” “Mooooo!” “Moo-Moooooooooooo!” It seemed like my familiars were making short work of the cows.

“Geez, I wonder if this is all gonna be okay? Well, for now I guess I'll just go and retrieve the meat. I can stop them if they go too far.”

.....

.....

.....

“I was an idiot for thinking I could stop them...” I was bent over in frustration, with countless chunks of dungeon beef littering the grasslands around me.

Even though I shouted, “We've got enough!” to my familiars, none of them listened.

They were all too preoccupied with hunting and weren't even paying any attention to me.

In the end, they only stopped when they'd killed every single dungeon cow on the entire floor.

And once all the dungeon cows were gone and they'd calmed down, there was a flood of excuses...

《**Mrr, we ended up killing them all without noticing.**》

《Oh maaann~, when I thought about all the delicious meat, I just couldn't help myself.》

《The meat looked good so Sui got lots and lots~!》 And they'd already killed everything, so there was nothing I could do.

It'd be a waste to leave the drops, so in the end I had everyone pick the meat up.

Giving Fel the magic bag turned out to be a stroke of genius, and the retrieval of all the meat went far faster than the 10th floor.

All in all, I ended up with enough chunks of dungeon beef to go into the triple digits.

“Then let’s go to the next floor. ...I think you all know this by now, but moderate yourselves! MODERATE. YOURSELVES.”

《**You are being annoyingly persistent. I know already.**》

《Yeah, yeah, I get it.》

《Okay~!》

Do they really?



We finally reached the last floor of this dungeon, the 12th.

“Those two look like a special evolved dungeon pig and dungeon cow over there.” There were a couple dungeon monsters that were clearly larger than even the normal evolved forms walking about here and there. On top of that, the dungeon pig’s tusks and the dungeon cow’s horns looked even thicker and sharper at the ends.

《**Yes, most likely. And it seems like they plan to stand against us. The cheek.**》

“Hm? Stand against? What?” I looked over at the ones I’d just picked out as special individuals, and...

“Grk!” They were looking right at us.

Then, they swiped the ground several times with their front hooves and...

“MOOOOOOOOOO!” “OOOOOIIIIINNKKKK!” With a shout, both of them dashed headlong at us.

Thud The sounds of their hooves pealed like thunder.

“Crap! They’re coming for us!” That wasn’t all. The special individuals managed to attract some other evolved forms who joined the charge.

“SHITSHITSHIT!” The sight of the dungeon pigs and dungeon cows charging at us was so imposing I felt like I’d wet myself.

《Do not falter! They are no match for us! Dora, Sui, we are going to give them a taste of their own medicine!》

《Of course! As if they could hold a candle to our power! I’ll turn them all into meat!》

《Yeeaahhhh! Sui will beat lots and lots!》 I might have been cowed, but on the other hand, my familiars all rushed to meet the charging dungeon monsters.

And.....

BOOOooooom! Cracklecracklecracklee...

whoosh whoosh whoosh

Thudssshh Thudshhhh Thudsshh

slash slash slash slash

pew pew pew pew pew

Lightning assaulted the dungeon pigs and dungeon cows.

Then came the slashes like sharp blades of wind.

Dora-chan would fly freely through them as well, opening up large holes while wreathed in fire.

He would also pierce through heads with pillars of ice.

Meanwhile, Sui rapidly fired its Acid Bullet at them.

The attacks from my familiars all flew through the air at the monsters.

The huge group of pigs and cows that bravely came to fight us were now pitifully routed.

“.....It’s so one-sided, I’m actually pitying the dungeon pigs and cows.” Pandemonium ensued as my familiars, the invincible trio, chased around the dungeon pigs and dungeon cows, steadily decreasing their number.

Then, after a couple dozen minutes.

《All right, this is the last one! Take this!!!》 *Thudshhhh* Dora-chan, wreathed in

fire, flew speedily and went right through the flank of the last special dungeon cow.

“Mmmooooooooo!” As it gave its death cry, it fell sideways.

Then all that was left of it was a large chunk of meat.

And the floor was once again quiet.

The huge army of dungeon pigs and dungeon cows had been completely wiped out.

“.....Hey, Fel.”

《**Mm, I know you said to use moderation, but there was no other choice this time.**》

《Yeah! They’re the ones that came at us!》

《Masterrr, there’s so much meat!》

“*Sigh*~ Yeah, you’re right Fel. That would have been dangerous if you didn’t kill them. Right. Well as always, it’ll be a waste to just leave the meat there so let’s get cracking. There’s a huge amount to pick up. Help me, all of you.” I started gathering the huge amount of meat along with my familiars.

“Agggghhh, it’s finally over.” I couldn’t help myself. I lay down, spread-eagled in the grass.

《**My word, you are as soft as ever.**》 Fel had sat down beside me and was looking down at me, exasperated.

“Oh shut up~, it was a lot of work picking all that up. All that bending over really affects my waist.”

《**And that is why you are soft. Now stand up. I am hungry, let us leave.**》

《Agreed. I’m getting hungry too.》

《Sui is also hungry~!》

“Ahhh, fine, fine. Hup.” I’d wanted to rest some more, but having been urged on, I got up. “Then let’s go back, I guess.”



When we got out of the dungeon, I found that the day had already gone and it was dark now.

It seemed like we were in the dungeon for a long time.

It was late, but since we had that request from the Adventurer's guild's guildmaster, Giannino, I decided to stop by there before going home.

It looked like Giannino was anxiously waiting for us, since he came over almost as soon as we entered the guild. He'd asked for ten chunks each of the dungeon pork and dungeon beef, but I handed him an extra five of each kind. Given how wild my familiars went on the 10th, 11th, and 12th floors, I could spare it after all. Hahaha...

My Item Box was currently overflowing with meat.

Giannino seemed perfectly satisfied, having finally obtained some meat from the evolved forms for the first time in a long while.

Since it'd been so long, he bought the meat at a higher price than usual, and I ended up with 360 gold in my pocket.

I quickly took the money and returned to the house I'd rented. I'd originally been planning for some sort of entrail dish for dinner, but I was far too tired to bother. I just made something simple and decided to leave the entrail dishes for later.

"I'm gonna enjoy these entrails tomorrow!"

Chapter 3: Grilled Entrails

I took out the dungeon pig and dungeon cow entrails from my Item Box.

When I unwrapped the leaves...

“This is heart, liver, and large intestine. This one here is tongue, first stomach, and small intestine. There’s lots of different innards in here.” I was organizing the innards using Appraisal.

Luckily, both the dungeon pigs and dungeon cows dropped a number of the various innards.

“There’s so many different organs, I’ll have a bunch of options. But the first dish has gotta be... grilled!” *Grilled offal has gotta be the only choice for something hearty. I have my barbecue grill too, so I can use charcoal...*

When I saw both large and small intestines, the desire to eat fried offal just welled up in me.

I remembered the sight of fat dripping off meat onto burning charcoal, only to sizzle and turn to fragrant smoke.

Then, I thought of the soft texture of the organ meat and the almost sweet fattiness.....

Slrrp

Oh crap, I’m drooling.

Of course, I’d also be cooking other parts too.

With that decided, I moved on to preparing the entrails. It was a lot of work, but if it wasn’t done it’d ruin the entire dish. The intestines, called “chitterlings” when cooked, were what I was most excited about, and they required particularly close attention, otherwise they’d be unusable.

I had to carefully and thoroughly prepare each organ. Personally, I liked to use flour for this part. I read online that this was the way that restaurants did it, so I followed suit.



Put flour on the intestines and massage thoroughly. By doing so, the flour will absorb any smell or filth in the intestine. After fully massaging the flour in, wash the intestines clean with water. If the smell is gone, put the intestines into a sieve and let them drain to finish the preparation. If the smell remains, then repeat the flour step once more.

“I already knew this, but it sure is a lot of work. Well, it’s necessary for something delicious, so it’s fine though.” After that, I silently and fixedly continued to prepare the meat.

“Whew~, managed to finish.” I not only prepared the organ meat, but managed to season it too. I was completely prepared.

In my opinion, a miso sauce suited offal best, so that was the only choice to take.

I mixed miso, sake, mirin, sugar, red chili paste, grated garlic, grated ginger, and sesame oil together to make a sauce which I massaged into the offal.

Of course, I also prepared yakiniku sauce for some parts that I didn’t season.

In addition to the usual long-selling flavor I liked, I also splurged a little for the sauce from a certain high-class yakiniku shop.

Now all that’s left is to set up the barbecue grill outside and start cooking.



The sizzling sounds of cooking offal filled the air. As did the fragrant smoke of fat hitting the charcoal. The whole scene really stirred the appetite. And the smell of burnt miso sauce only worked me up more.

I was using tongs to grill up a whole bunch of chitterlings.

《**Hey, is it done yet?**》

《Hurry it up!》

《Masteerrr, is it done yet?》 My familiars were all drooling and out of patience.

“Hmmm, wait a second. ...Maybe these are good?” I piled up some savory-

smelling dungeon beef chitterlings on a plate and served them out.

“Here.”

《**So this is intestine? It smells so appetizing, but...**》

“Just try eating it. I can guarantee the taste.”

《**I see. In that case...**》 After Fel took a bite, something seemed to snap in him, and he started wolfing the food down.

Dora-chan and Sui were the same.

They were all stuffing themselves in a trance.

“Hahaha, it’s good right? Oh, these are about done too.” Next were the dungeon pig’s chitterlings.

Since it’s pork, I cooked it for a long time.

The intestines were cooked well enough that they became so swollen it looked like they might explode. I had to swallow the drool that was about to come out of my mouth just from looking at it.

Oh! I need to bring that thing I bought out.

I reached into my Item Box and retrieved an ice-cold beer.

I figured that a sharp and dry beer would go perfectly with the fatty intestines, so I chose A-company’s beer this time.

Pssh

“Right. The beer’s ready now. Time to eat.” I took a bite of chitterlings that were just dripping fat.

“Hot! Hot! Haagghh, haaggh..... It’s hot, but amazingly good!” The fatty juices welled up in my mouth, and they tasted savory and a little sweet.

The miso sauce I seasoned the organ meat with fit better than I could have ever imagined.

It was basically B-class cuisine that I’d go to a store to buy.

And after having a bite of chitterlings, of course...

glugluglugluglug “Aahhhhh!”

“I love this!” This! This is it! So good!

I continued to intersperse bites of chitterlings with mouthfuls of beer.

“Ahhh~, this really is the best.” While I was soaking in this almost miraculous pairing of food and drink, I was interrupted by my familiars’ demands for more.

《**Hey, that looks good too. Give me what you are having.**》

《Me too!》

《Sui too!》

“Sure, sure. Dungeon pork it is.” This time I piled up dungeon pork chitterlings for my familiars and served it to them.

They quickly started chowing down.

《**This dungeon pork is a delight!**》

《Yeah. Still, I never expected intestines to be this good.》

《**Indeed. Neither did I.**》

“You see, entrails need to be properly cleaned and prepared to be good. It just takes a lot of work.”

《It’s delicious!》 Like that, we continued to enjoy the charcoal-grilled intestine.

By the way, the dungeon beef chitterlings with miso sauce on it were also just perfect, with their savory and juicy flavors and just a hint of sweetness in the fat.

But while we were enjoying the grilled intestine, the smoke coming up from the grill drew some spectators...

I actually wasn’t sure if it was the smoke or the smell, but I could see lots of people outside trying to peek in.

Of course, the house I rented was surrounded by an iron fence so none of them tried to barge in and we could continue to enjoy the food at our leisure. That is, until some people appeared who weren’t deterred so easily.

《Hey...》 Dora-chan couldn’t just ignore what was going on beyond the fence and kept looking that way.

“Ahh, don’t worry about it. Just ignore them.”

《You say that, but I can’t just keep eating while being stared at this hard.》

《**That is the look of someone with a lot of tenacity towards food.**》 *For even Fel to say that... That’s scary.*

I slowly and subtly glanced towards the fence, and...

There were a multitude of snot-nosed little kids clinging to the fence and drooling.

There were the kids I’d saved on a whim yesterday in front, and a bunch of others behind them too.

“Why are they even here...?” While I felt exasperated, it didn’t seem like they’d leave any time soon as long as we were still having our meal.

Like Dora-chan said, being stared at so intently made it hard to enjoy the food.

“Geez, fine.” With no other choice, I got up and headed for the fence.



“What do you kids want?” I spoke to the leader kid from the orphan party yesterday.

“Ah! Old m-I mean, big bro!”

Youuu... I’m not old!

“So, did you need anything?”

“Yeah. I wanted to ask you something.”

“What?”

“Yeah. Honestly...” According to the leader kid, Luis, when they returned to the orphanage yesterday with their new weapons made by Sui, the other kids who went into the dungeon all saw them and wanted their own.

So all the other kids crowded Luis and the others, wanting to know where they got them...

“So you told them about me?”

“Sorry bro. I don’t know how many times I told them we shouldn’t do this since we’d be a bother, but none of ’em would listen...” Luis said, looking sorry.

Makes sense. They are going into a dungeon, even if it is only the first floor. If they aren’t careful, they’ll get hurt, so of course they’d want better weapons if they can get them.

“I understand. But how did you know I was here?”

“You’re easy to find if you just ask around a little. Everybody’s talking about the S-ranked tamer adventurer, you know? Like, I didn’t know you were S-ranked, that’s awesome! You don’t look like one at all!” *Hey, you added something unnecessary on the end there. It’s true I don’t look like an S-ranked adventurer, though.*

“Well, whatever. Just come inside for now. If you keep gluing yourselves to the fence like that, you’ll block foot traffic, and we can’t eat in peace either.”

“We couldn’t help it, okay? That smell is just amazing. Right, everyone?” Luis turned to the others, and they all nodded fervently.

“*Sigh* Fine, I get it, I get it. Just come in for now.” I ushered the boys and girls from the orphanage past the fence.

That much was fine, but...

Their eyes were glued on the grill.

Like, mega-strength *epoxy* glued.

You can stare at it all you want, but there’s nothing even on the grill anymore. I gave the rest of it to Fel and the others.

Well, it was in a state where I could start cooking again immediately, though.

But geez, they were all looking like starving beasts.

I didn’t mind feeding them a little, but I wondered if I had enough. Preparing entrails takes a long time, so I only made enough for me and my familiars.

.....*Ah, I have an idea.*

Why not just have them prepare it?

I still had lots of entrails, so I could make it something like payment for letting

them eat.

Yeah. That sounds good.

“Hey, do you guys want some food?” I asked, and they all nodded enthusiastically.

“I’m okay with letting you have some, but...” As soon as I said that, they all cheered and rushed the barbecue grill.

“Wait just a second!!! Listen here! First, you have to listen to what I have to say.”

“Aww, what is it big bro? Weren’t you gonna feed us?” Luis said, looking unsatisfied.

The expressions of the children around him mirrored his sentiment.

“Hey now, I never said I’d feed you for free. See, if you want to eat my food I’m going to have you do some work first. If you’re fine with that, I’ll feed you. How about it?”

“Oh, so it’s like that. As long as we don’t need to pay you money we’re fine with anything. Right?” Luis turned the question over to the others, and they all agreed with him.

“Great, then wait a second.” I took forks and plates out from my Item Box.

There were 21 children in total.

It was lucky that I had just enough for everyone.

“Okay, I’ll start cooking now.” Once again, I started to grill intestines on the barbecue grill.

The sizzling sounds of the cooking meat as well as the smell really stimulated the appetite.

“Hey, do not just be feeding these whelps. We are still eating too,” Fel said unhappily as he peeked over.

“Woah! The huge wolf just talked!”

“Wooww! I’ve never seen a talking wolf before!”

“Me neither! Amazing!” The kids were all surprised that Fel could speak.

It looked like none of the children from the orphanage knew about Fenrirs. While they were probably aware of the fairy tales with Fenrirs in them, they probably couldn't tell that Fel was a Fenrir himself. But, like children tended to be, they were curious rather than afraid. They were just as interested in Dorachan and Sui, who were next to Fel, but their appetites were more important to them in the end.

“It's done.” The moment I said that, the children all pushed my familiars aside in a mad rush to put their plate out first.

That left even my familiars dazed with shock.

So I decided to serve the hungry children first before getting back to Fel and the others.

“To have been able to outrace me to food, these whelps are pretty good,”
Fel half-gripped as he ate.

The children in question easily put down the food, saying, “It feels kind of weird but it's delicious.”



Of course, the children weren't satisfied with just that, and I was made to grill up even more chitterlings.

When I first told them that they were eating the intestines of dungeon cows and dungeon pigs, they all reacted with surprise, saying things like "What? That booby prize?" and "You mean that flabby and gross stuff?" But in the end, it was delicious so they didn't stop eating.

And since I had to feed 21 children with bottomless-pit stomachs on top of my familiars, the chitterlings I prepared all disappeared quickly.....

"Oh no, there's none left. And it'll take a long time to prepare more... Oh well, I guess I'll just have to break out the dungeon pork and dungeon beef. The regular cuts, I mean." The meat from the evolved monsters was too luxurious for the kids.

They were still plenty excited to be eating the regular versions, though.

Since they were getting a rare feast, everyone was stuffing themselves as full as they could.

Damn, at least hold back a little.



"Whew, I'm stuffed," Luis said, seeming satisfied.

"I'm so full~!"

"I've never eaten meat like this before. I'm so happy..."

"That was so good~..." The kids all looked satisfied, with round and full bellies.

"Okay, everyone, once you've digested a little, I'm going to have you work like you promised."

""""""Whaaaat?!"""""" The kids were all unhappy to be brought back to the real world by my words while they were basking in a drowsy stupor after the meal they had.

"Don't 'what' me. You promised, didn't you? I fed you all until you were stuffed. So now you work." They promised, so I was going to collect in full.

"Well, fine, I guess. We did promise, everyone. Plus the food he gave us was

really good,” Luis said, and the other kids all one by one voiced their agreement.

“True.”

“Aww, fine.”

“He did feed us all that meat...”

Hehahahaha, workforce obtained!

I’m gonna make them prepare all the intestines I have!

And that way I won’t have to do it later when I cook them.

Now then, let’s have them get to work.



“All right, no time to rest! Massage them with the flour, don’t let up.”

“I’m so tirreeedddd~!”

“Don’t complain. You’re going to work for all the food I gave you guys.”

“Boooo!”

At the moment, I was in the kitchen watching over and instructing the children as they prepared my entrails for cooking. They were in the middle of working with the large and small intestines, which I had an especially large quantity of. I had them massaging the intestines in a bowl with flour, then rinsing it all out with water.

At first, the kids were all excited, saying things like, “Ewww it’s so squidgy~,” and, “It looks so gross,” but after repeating the process several times all of them were starting to complain about being tired.

This certainly is fairly intensive labor.

But a promise is a promise.

I did have them take proper breaks and everything, too.

It was impossible to finish preparing all the entrails I had today, but they did manage to finish two-thirds of all the intestines I had.

Looking back, it would have been really hard to do all that on my own.

Work really does go by faster with more helping hands.

“Ahh~, I’m so tired. You’re a slave driver, bro,” Luis complained.

The other children all silently nodded in agreement. They seemed just as worn out as Luis.

“Well, uhhh... You guys really helped me today. Thanks. And you did good work, so here.” I handed the children two chunks of dungeon pork.

I didn’t know how many children were in the orphanage, but even if it wasn’t enough for everyone to have a steak or whatever, that amount should have been enough for a filling soup or some sort of stir fry at least.

Especially since the meat chunks that regular dungeon pigs dropped were pretty large.

““““““YEESSSSSS!”““““““ As soon as they saw the chunks of dungeon pork, the exhausted kids were all instantly revived.

“You sure, bro?!” Luis asked, excited beyond measure.

“Yeah. You all worked really hard today,” I said, and the children all gave a cheer.

“So what should I do with this? It’s pretty heavy, can you all carry it back home? If you want I can carry it for you.”

“No need. Hey, Geraldo, can you take two or three people and borrow a board from the old man’s store?”

“Sure.” Geraldo, who was Luis’ party member, took three people with him and left. After a while, they came back carrying a wooden board.

Apparently they had an acquaintance who owned a store nearby where they occasionally worked, so they borrowed a board from there.

“Good. We can just put the meat on this and have everyone help carry it.”

I see. Yeah, they should be able to carry the meat with this.

The children were all excited and happy that they’d be able to bring such a nice present back home.

And they were looking so exhausted just a moment ago, too... what a

mercenary mindset. But, well, I guess that makes it easier to ask them to do things in the future.

“I have a question, Luis. You said you worked just now, right? How much do you make a day?”

“Hm? You mean how much I’m paid? Around 7 or 8 copper coins a day. It’s not a lot, but we don’t really get many chances to make money anyway so we’re grateful for the work.”

I see, I see. That’s good info. Now it’s even easier to ask. They might even accept.

“I see. Then I have another offer for you. To tell you the truth, I still have more entrails to go through. If you come back tomorrow to do the same thing, I’ll give you 1 silver each. How does that sound? Of course, I’ll feed you, too.”

“Really, bro?! We’ll do it! Definitely!”

“Hey, don’t you need to ask everyone else first?”

“Oh, right. But I’m pretty sure they’ll say yes anyway. Wait a second.” Luis went to consult with the other children.

“Of course we’ll do it!”

“1 silver and food?! Ah, yeah!”

“He’s gonna feed us that good stuff again, right?! Of course I’ll do it!”

“I’m in! Totally in! Food on top of 1 silver? Talk about a score!” After hearing about the offer from Luis, the other children all enthusiastically exclaimed their willingness in chorus.

“You probably heard them already bro, but they’re all ready and willing.”

“I see. That’s great. Then I’ll see you all tomorrow,” I said, and the children all replied energetically.

“Yeah!”

“We’ll be back tomorrow!”

“Okay!”

crowd of children was clearly larger than yesterday.

“Yeah, about that...” Luis guiltily started, his eyes darting away and back to me over and over.

It turned out to be the same pattern as yesterday.

When they got back with the dungeon pork, all the other kids asked, “Where did you get that?” That was when the more talkative kids started talking about the grilled chitterlings and my job offer.

Of course, that became a hot topic, and when they learned that they’d get 1 silver on top of a delicious meal...

“So that’s why there’s so many of you. Well, I guess having more hands is always better.”

“Yeah, it looks like pretty much everyone who wasn’t already busy today came.” Just by quick estimation, I figured there must have been twice as many children here as yesterday.

“And I’m not really sure what’s up with this, but some of them insisted on coming since they want to become chefs with their own stalls or restaurants in the future.”

“Not really sure? Come on, of course it’s because they want to know how to prepare entrails for the future.” *Given what happened yesterday, that’s pretty obvious.*

“Huh? Why?”

“Well, what did you think of yesterday’s food?”

“It was amazing!” Luis thought back to the food yesterday, and added, “It, like, burst in my mouth!”

“Right? And what did I say that meat was?”

“.....Ah!! I see, that was all booby prizes!” It seemed like Luis finally cottoned on.

Entrail drops were considered booby prizes in the dungeon here, and most adventurers would immediately just throw away any they got.

Each drop was fairly large for both dungeon pigs and dungeon cows.

It was enough to make me wonder if it would be profitable to buy cheap entrails from adventurers for a store.

If there was a way to make something that had up until now been considered terrible due to lack of proper preparation into something delicious, then any proper cook would want to know it.

“Then are you sure about this, bro? Isn’t this the sort of thing you keep a secret? It’d be like a special for your restaurant or something. You shouldn’t be sharing it with just anyone.”

“Hmmm, well that’s true. If I wanted to open a restaurant here, then yeah that might be the case. But I’m not planning to. Plus, it’s a good thing for people to be able to enjoy more food.”

“I see. Thanks, bro.”

“Well, I’ll still have you do your work properly. ...Actually, I’ve been wondering this for a while now. What’re you planning to do with children that small?” I was looking at some toddlers who were only around five years old holding the hands of the older kids.

There were about six of them, on a quick count.

There was one boy with bunny ears, a girl with dog ears, another with cat ears, two human boys, and one human girl.

I wasn’t sure what exactly they were doing here, but they were holding on to the hands of the older kids and smiling happily.

“Well, they said they were coming with us and wouldn’t take no for an answer. Even if we tried to leave them behind they’d start crying...” Luis seemed genuinely troubled.

Apparently he was forced to take them along since otherwise they’d start bawling their eyes out.

“W-Well, I guess there’s nothing to do about it now that they’re here.”

“Yeah, sorry bro. Really.”



“Hey, why have I been saddled with responsibility over these guttersnipes?”

“It’s not just you, Fel. Dora-chan and Sui are with you, too.”

《I hate kids, just so you know. I’m just going to be supporting you, that’s all. Got it?》

《Sui wants to play with eeeveryone!》 Sui was bouncing around beside the orphans.

Seeing that, the kids were also happily playing around with it.

“Mister Wolf~!” Flora, one of the human girls, clung onto Fel.

“Ah, that’s not fair! I wanna do that too!” The cat-eared beastfolk girl, Debbie, followed suit.

When she did, the other children all piled on as well.

“H-Hey! You brats! Leave me be!” The toddlers all clung onto Fel and enjoyed his fluffiness. It was pretty funny.

“The weather’s nice outside, so just go out and play with them. It seems they all like you Fel, so I need you to look after them. We’re going to be doing the same thing as yesterday, preparing entrails.”

“W-Wait!”

“Okay, I’m counting on you guys. Ah, be careful not to hurt them. And don’t let them outside the house. You three take care of the children together, you hear? I’ll make something good for dinner.”

《Oh fine, you’re really twistin’ my leg here...》

《Yayyy! Sui will do Sui’s best!》

“You remember this! It will come back to you!”

Oh? Did Fel say something? I didn’t catch it. Nope, totally didn’t.

“H-Hey, bro, you sure it’ll be alright?”

“It’ll be fine. Fine, I say! My familiars are pretty reliable. More importantly, you guys are gonna continue where you left off yesterday. I want to finish all

the entrails I have today, so get ready to work hard!” After that, the older kids all worked hard preparing the entrails that I had left.

They finished off all the intestines I had left, then I had them do the liver, heart, and other stuff too.

For the liver, I had them use the salt and vinegar I had on hand to prepare it. The way to do it is, you have to massage both the salt and vinegar in for around 10 to 15 minutes before rinsing it with water until the water starts coming out clear. Liver can also be soaked in milk to clean it, but since I didn’t have any milk on hand I had the kids use this method. The salt and vinegar method is useful for when milk isn’t available or when there isn’t enough time, since it’s also a little faster.

For the hearts, I had them cut into them to remove all the clotted blood and wash out anything else. Then, they had to hand wash the hearts in salt water before leaving them in ice water to soak.

Beef reticulum — that is, the second compartment of the stomach — took the most work out of all the edible entrails, but there was nothing to be done about that, so they just had to work hard for their money.

First, you have to soak it in water-baths of different temperatures to loosen up the black skin on the organ, then scrape off the black skin with a spoon. Doing so requires a lot of patience, but without it the thing would be almost inedible. After peeling off the skin, it has to be boiled for a while too. This usually takes a long time, so I decided to handle that myself.

In the meantime, I had the orphans get back to work on other organs, while bearing their stream of complaints.

But among the children, the kids who wanted to be chefs were muttering to themselves passionately, saying things like, “I see, so this is how you get rid of the stink and gameyness...”

They asked me a lot of questions, too.

Well, I did make sure to teach them as much as I could.

At any rate, work went on like that until...

“Okay, it’s all done. Good work, everyone,” I said, and the children raised a cheer.

Since I had so many helping hands, things went along quite a bit faster than I expected.

“Now, I promised all of you food. There’s a lot of you, so we’ll eat out in the yard,” I said, and once again the children cheered.

Then, in high spirits, they all rushed out into the yard. I chased after them and found the younger orphans all played out and sleeping on Fel. Sui was also fast asleep, mixed among them.

《**You finally came...**》 Fel looked exhausted.

《**Do something about these tiny hellions. They keep pulling on my fur and trying to climb me. These things are way nastier than any monster.**》

Ahh..... I get it, since they’re so young, they don’t have a concept of fear, so they do whatever they want. My condolences. But you really saved me.

I had Luis wake up the kids who were sleeping on Fel.

Some of them grumbled lightly, but as soon as they heard that they’d get good food, they woke right up.

《**Ahh, thank you...**》

“No, thank *you* for the hard work. We’ll be eating now. It’s going to be karaage, so eat lots and cheer up.”

《**So I shall. I need to restore my willpower with a good meal or I will never last.**》 After that, we all enjoyed a karaage party.

I used up a large chunk of the cockatrice meat we’d managed to gather last night in the dungeon.

I made both an orthodox karaage with a soy sauce-based sauce rubbed in, and one with a salt-based sauce rubbed in.

It was really popular with the kids, and the pile I’d made disappeared really fast.

My familiars kept up with the huge crowd of children too, and ate just as

much.

“Was the karaage good?” I asked, and they all nodded fervently with their mouths still full.

“There’s still lots more so take your time and enjoy yourselves,” I said, but they still rushed to stuff themselves as fast as they could.

“Ah! I almost forgot! This is for you, bro!” Luis seemed to remember something while stuffing himself with karaage, and he took out a paper from his pocket.

“What’s this?”

“The director gave it to me. He wanted me to give it to you.” I read the letter, and it turned out to be a thank you note from the director.

The letter, which was neatly written and politely worded, made me feel a little itchy.

All I did was give them some meat...

The director also apologized in the letter for not thanking me in person.

Apparently one of his helpers quit, so the entire orphanage was currently being run with just the director and two nuns, who were all being kept extremely busy.

According to Luis, there were around 60 children living in the orphanage, including some who weren’t even old enough to eat solid food. It seemed like it was really tough going for the orphanage staff.

I should donate something to them while I’m in town.

I didn’t like making donations when I didn’t know what it’d be used for, but I felt no hesitation this time since I knew it would be for children.



“Aahhh~, that was great.”

“It was so delicious...”

“I’m stuffed,” the kids said, one after another, while rubbing their bellies.

You really can never go wrong with karaage. I was right to make so much.

“Master, I’d like to learn how to make this, ‘karaage,’ but before that I’d really like you to teach me how to cook all that offal we worked on!”

.....Master? I don’t remember making you my apprentice.

“Yeah, master! Please teach us how to cook offal!”

Uhh, like I said, I don’t remember ever accepting any apprentices.

The two kids who cheekily started calling me ‘master’ were the ones who were the most passionate by far of those who wanted to be cooks in the future, and who kept asking me the most questions. Their names were Maynard and Enzo.

“Master, please!”

“Please!” The two of them continued to push.

“Ahhh fine, fine. But it’s too late today, so next time.”

“Next time? When exactly?!”

“Tomorrow?!”

““Please be clear about it!”” I wasn’t sure why, but the two of them were really imposing.

“Ah, ahhh... Tomorrow! You can come tomorrow morning, around the same time you arrived today!” I caved to the pressure given off by the two of them and said that before I could properly think things through.

The two of them smiled and said, “Then we’ll come again tomorrow.”

Sigh I don’t know why, but I guess I’ll be teaching the two of them how to cook intestines tomorrow.

Ah, I also remembered to pay the children who worked today.

All of them happily clutched the silver coin I gave them.

Chapter 4: I Gained Disciples

“We’re ready to listen, Master!”

“Please make good on your promise and teach us how to cook offal, Master!”

“Ummm, you two are here way too early. Also, please stop calling me that. I just met you yesterday, for one thing.”

“No, you are our master.”

“Exactly!”

“What? I don’t... *Sigh*~...” No matter what I said, neither of them showed any sign of fixing how they referred to me, so I sighed in resignation.

Yesterday, I caved and agreed to teach the two of them to cook, but they arrived way earlier than what we agreed on and charged inside.

Even though I’d only just had breakfast and my brain was still booting up.

“Master, hurry and teach us how to cook offal!”

“Yeah! It’s real important to us.”

“*Sigh* Fine, fine. Just come with me for now.” With no other choice, I showed the two orphans into the kitchen.

“You asked me to show you how to cook offal, but it’s not really anything special. The most important thing is what you learned yesterday, how to clean and prepare the organ meat. As long as that’s done properly, you can do pretty much anything with it and it’ll be good.”

““I see.””

“Out of all the entrails I have, the largest stock is of intestines... Here,” I said while taking out some of the intestines that were prepared yesterday from my Item Box and showing it to them.

“These are delicious even if you just cut them up roughly and season with salt and pepper before cooking, but they’re also nice when coated with sauce. You

can basically treat it like the dungeon beef and dungeon pork that this town already sells. All that's different is the 'cut,' if you will."

"I see. Which means this can also be served as skewers."

"Of course." I affirmed the kid's deduction, and for some reason the two orphans looked at each other and grinned.

"Hey Enzo, this'll work!"

"Yeah. We have the ultimate sauce we made through trial and error, too." Fitting for people who were aiming to become professional cooks in Rosenthal, said to be the holy land for cuisine, it seemed that the two of them had already developed their own unique sauce.

"You've already seen how to grill it, but what about boiling or stewing? Do you want me to show you an example?"

"Please!"

"Yes, please!" I'd heard that these two planned to start with a stall, and since they figured stews could be served at one, they wanted to know all about them.

"Well, there technically is a lot of choice, but..." Chitterling hot pot wasn't really suited for serving out of stalls, and for stewed offal they'd need soy sauce and miso.

But given how they couldn't get soy sauce or miso, I couldn't very well teach them that, either.

Since that was the case, I decided on showing them how to make tomato stew with tripe. I expected it to be good for them since it seemed like the dish could be made entirely with ingredients from this world.

"Okay, I'll make a tomato stew."



"Okay, this should do it for the preparations." I cut the beef reticulum and intestines into appropriately-sized pieces before boiling the offal in some water, throwing away the water, and repeating the process a second time.

I personally thought the dungeon pig intestines were better, but since this

was a tripe stew, I used the dungeon beef's intestines instead.

"I thought this would be really quick, but offal takes a lot of work, doesn't it?" Maynard said as he boiled and drained the entrails under my instruction.

"Yeah, I thought this could be served up pretty much immediately since we went through all that work with the flour and salt." Enzo followed up.

"I get that. If you're just going to grill or fry the stuff, the preparation from yesterday is all you need, but for stews you need to do this too. It's to clean away any scum or mucus that'd pop up in the stew so it turns out better."

"“I see~.”" The two of them looked really serious about learning how to cook this dish.

"I'll get the ingredients ready, so let's get to cooking." While the two of them were repeating the boiling and draining of the entrails, I was buying the food we'd need with my skill.

"Then, split up and start cooking. Maynard, you'll be making the tomato soup base..." Normally I'd use canned tomatoes since it was easier, but those didn't exist in this world so I had to teach the kid how to do it from scratch.

Well, all that really entailed was peeling the tomatoes in hot water and boiling the rest of it in some water and salt while scooping out any scum that forms on the surface.

"Enzo, you'll cut the vegetables." The onions, carrots, and celery needed to be diced into cubes of about 5mm in size, while the garlic needed to be minced.

bubble bubble bubble

chop chop chop

As was fitting for people aiming to cook professionally, the two orphans were pretty practiced in the kitchen.

"Good. The tomato soup base is done, and it looks like the vegetables are all cut. Then let's move on to the next step. First, pour some olive oil into a pot and add in the minced garlic before heating the pot on low." The minced garlic roasted slowly in the golden olive oil.

"Once the garlic looks like this — Oh, in my country we call garlikke “garlic” —

Anyway, once it starts releasing a smell like this, add in the vegetables that Enzo cut earlier..... And put a bay leaf on top as you continue to cook.” This world had its fair share of dried herbs, and bay leaves were fairly easy to come by, so I figured this flourish would be fine.

“Just like this, add in the oni.....I mean oneons. Once they turn a little see-through, add the offal and continue cooking. The next thing to add is the tomato soup base that Maynard prepared along with some dashi made from dried meat. On top of that, put in some boiled chipeas and stew the whole thing for a while.” Normally, I’d rather use consomme stock, but I couldn’t use that in front of the two orphans so I made a stock using some dried meat I had on hand.

As for the chipeas, I bought them with my skill. They came in a can, so I just dumped them out onto a dish. This world had something called chipeas that were basically just chickpeas, so I didn’t see any problem in just buying canned chickpeas and pretending.

Cannellini beans or soybeans would work well too, but chipeas were most common in this world so I went with that.

“At this point, once the offal softens up, the last step is to adjust the taste with salt and pepper. It’s pretty simple, right?” The two of them were noting the steps with a serious expression as I talked, so when I turned the ball over to them they just nodded.

“The taste of offal dishes depends on how thoroughly you can clean and prepare them, right Master?”

“That’s right, Maynard.”

“Honestly, I think it’s a waste of flour and salt, but I guess it’s necessary...”

“Yeah. I don’t think you need to use that much salt and flour for this, though. You’ve learned about how much you’ll need yesterday, right?”

“Yes.” Enzo sank into thought at my question and started to mutter, “A medium scoop of flour for one drop...”

“Now that I think about it, it’s not that much.”

“That’s right, Enzo. And look...” According to Maynard, the orphanage received more than enough flour and salt, partially as supplies and partially as their funding.

That was because not only was this area a big producer of wheat, but also rock salt.

Actually, while this town was famous for its meat because of the dungeon, all the villages around it apparently dealt with wheat.

Now that I think about it, I saw a lot of wheat fields on the way here, didn’t I?

Meanwhile...

“Oh, it’s looking pretty good. Now just adjust to taste with salt and pepper... There, it’s done.”

“Gulp... There’s so much in this soup, it looks delicious...”

“Smells delicious too.”

“Ah, pepper’s really expensive so I think you don’t have to push yourselves to get any. Also, dried basil will make this pretty good, too. Well anyway, the toppings and extra stuff are pretty flexible and up to you, so feel free to experiment. For now, just try this one.” I spooned out a share for the two orphans and myself, and...

At some point, my gluttons were...

“Ahh, you guys want some too?”

“Of course.”

The two kids were really startled by the sudden appearance of Fel and the others, but I calmed them down saying it was okay since these were just my familiars.

“I didn’t make enough to fill you guys up, so you’ll just be getting a taste. I’m warning you,” I said to Fel and the others as I spooned them some stew.

“Truly, this is a modest portion.”

《He told us it was just for tasting so there’s no helping it. If it’s good we can have him make more.》

《There's so little...》 As I thought, the portion was too small for them.

"I told you it's only for a taste test..." I complained as Fel and the others started eating.

"You two eat as well." The two orphans nodded and spooned some tomato stew into their mouths.

Then they slowly let it roll over their tongues so they could analyze it.

"It's so good... I thought it still might have some funk to it, but I was completely wrong. It's really easy to eat! Also, the offal is so soft and the flavors have soaked in really well. It's amazing how tasty it is!"

"I thought guts would taste... unique, but this is nice and easy to eat. It's really good! There's the acidity from the tomatoes, so you don't get tired of it at all. Also, there's so much stuff in this stew and I think it would go really well with bread." The two of them easily finished off what they had in their dishes while praising it to no end.

"Heheheheheheh... Enzo, we can win with this."

"Heheheheheheh... You're right, Maynard. We *can* win with this."

""Heheheheheheheh..."

Huh? What? I think Maynard and Enzo just broke.

"We can make something grilled with our ultimate sauce, and we also have this stew... It's perfect!"

"Yeah. We can go for the win with this!"

.....*What?*

"Hey, what've you two been going on about?"

"Ah, sorry Master. We got caught up in our own little world."

"But it's thanks to you that we have some hope. We might be able to place in the Meat Dungeon Festival!"

"Meat Dungeon Festival?" According to Maynard and Enzo, the Meat Dungeon Festival was something that was started around eight years ago in order to revitalize the town, and it was held once a year. Apparently, the main

activity in the festival was just enjoying all the meat that the dungeon produces.

The festival was three days long, and according to those two, the streets were basically buried in stalls selling meat dishes from the dungeon during that time.

The festival for this year was in ten days, and even full-on restaurants with good reputations would open stalls especially for this event.

“Every year it gets bigger. Last year there were almost 100 stalls open!”

“Yeah! And the festival’s gonna give us a chance to open up a stall too!” It seemed the Meat Dungeon Festival was important to these two as well, and they got more and more excited as they talked.

Apparently, during the festival, anyone could open up a stall as long as they handed in an application to the Merchant’s guild, so they were going to do just that.

“Normally you can’t do any business if you aren’t registered at the Merchant’s guild, but the Meat Dungeon Festival is special. Even kids like us who’re still training to become cooks can open one up to test our skills.”

I guess kids like that pool their money for the stall?

“The main event of the Meat Dungeon Festival is the awards ceremony at the end. They announce the five best stalls according to a popular vote by customers!” Enzo said excitedly.

“Yeah. And any stall that ends up in those top five gets a huge boost in popularity! The year before last, a stall run by someone named Marcus got ranked 4th and immediately became a really popular place to eat even though he’d only started his business really recently!” Maynard also sounded really excited.

I see. So you can become really popular regardless of if you’re a famous eatery, just a stall, or even a freshly started business as long as you rank in the top five? That’s pretty inspirational.

“We haven’t even set up our own business, but if we were to get a top rank during the festival, we can probably get hired at a big restaurant or something. Depending on the circumstances we might even be able to take over a store!”

Yeah, sounds like if you do well you'd be spoiled for choice.

Still...

"That's pretty interesting. Hey, are applications still open?"

""Huh?!""

"M-Master, a-are you going to apply?"

"What? Are you going to tell me I can't?"

"N-No, you can. But..." For some reason, both of them looked really troubled.

"We should have stayed quiet about the festival..."

"Great, now we have a powerful rival..." The two of them muttered.

"Oh, is that what you were worried about? I don't plan to use offal at all, so you two'll stand out more. There won't be anywhere else serving guts, right?"

""True..."

"Ah! Enzo, there's the location too! You can apply for the festival up to a week before it starts, but the locations are first come first serve so even if you apply now you probably won't get anywhere good."

"Ah, right! All that's left are the crap spots along the edges. So no matter how strong Master is, he'll probably have a tough time."

"Shouldn't you two be concentrating on your own stuff instead of worrying about someone like me who's only going to join for fun? You're aiming for a top rank, right? If you're going to try to do offal dishes, then you're gonna need to think about how to get the entrails too, you know?" I told them, and they gasped in realization.

Their brains were so occupied with remembering how to cook the entrails that they'd completely forgotten that they needed to get them first.

But after that gasp, they immediately started to stare at me.

Then they started to rub their hands together, and with a single wheedling voice...

""Master~..."

“W-What?”

““Give us your guts!!””

These two are gradually losing all sense of restraint, aren't they? I don't really mind, but I might as well get some extra work out of them while I'm at it.

“I can give you some, but you're going to have to help me prepare my dishes for the Meat Dungeon Festival too. If you do, I can... Let's see... give you four drops' worth of entrails,” I said, and the two of them started conferring with each other.

“Please make it five, Master!”

“Also, we'll only be helping you for a single day three days before the festival opens. The two days before we'll need to be doing our own preparations, so we can't budge on that.”

I'm okay with the five drops, but only that specific day? Well, my Item Box stops time so it's not like I have to worry about anything going bad... Yeah, there's no problem with that.

“Alright. It's a deal.” I shook their hands firmly.

“Hey, have you finished talking?”

“Hm? What's up Fel?”

“This was quite delectable. I want to eat more, so make it.”

《I want some too.》

《Sui wants more too~!》

.....*Fine, whatever.*

When the two orphans left, I was made to cook an enormous amount of tripe tomato stew at my familiar's request.



It was finally time for the Meat Dungeon Festival to start.

I applied for a stall the day after I'd heard about it from Maynard and Enzo.

Even though it was just iron-rank, I still had a Merchant's guild card, so the

application procedure was really simple. All I had to do was pay 3 silver. Apparently if I wasn't registered, there would have been a ton of forms and hoops to jump through.

After finishing my registration, I didn't really have anything else planned so we went back into the meat dungeon. My familiars were really bored, so they badgered me into going into the dungeon a full three times. And every time we did, I got an enormous number of drop meat. It was such a ridiculous amount that I actually considered just leaving it, but it felt like too much of a waste for me to stand in the end.

So I picked it all up.

And now there was an absolutely stupendous amount of meat in my Item Box.

I did sell off a large amount of dungeon pork and dungeon beef to the Adventurer's guild, which made the guildmaster Giannino really happy.

Apparently around the time of the festival, demand for the meat from the evolved forms roughly doubled thanks to the influx of customers.

Even after all that, I still had such a large amount of cockatrice, evolved dungeon pork and dungeon beef, and evolved special individual dungeon pork and dungeon beef (and of course, their entrails) that even with three massive gluttons to take care of, I probably didn't have to worry about food for a good long time.

Fel and the others wanted to go in an extra time, but my Item Box was already getting taken over by meat dungeon drops at that point and I didn't want even more, so I stopped them.

I'd finished my preparations for the food I'd be cooking at my stall three days ago.

As promised, Maynard and Enzo helped out and I had more than enough food prepared.

After all, I was only planning to operate a stall on the first day.

From what I heard at the Merchant's guild, while the Meat Dungeon Festival

would last three days, the number of days a stall would open was entirely up to the owners of the stall.

My familiars were dead set on going around the stalls after hearing about the festival, and I myself wanted to do the same.

As for the dish I was planning on serving at the festival... You guessed it, it's a hot dog! And since I wanted to keep to ingredients that were available in this world as much as possible, I decided to dress the hot dog with fresh tomato sauce rather than ketchup.

Personally, I thought my idea was great.

While there were quite a few stalls serving sausages, none of them seemed to be serving them inside bread, so by my reckoning the unusualness of the dish would make it more popular.

Most importantly, they were delicious.

With Maynard and Enzo's help, I made a large number of sausages, stuffed with evolved dungeon pork and dungeon beef. The two of them were really surprised when they saw the mithril mincer and my metal sausage nozzle, but I told them it was order made and everything was settled.

Apparently they heard about me being an S-ranked adventurer from Luis, so they just reacted with, "S-ranked adventurers sure are rich..."

I had already made the tomato sauce to replace the ketchup with, too.

To make it, oil up a frying pan and start cooking some minced garlic on low heat until it starts releasing its fragrance. Once that happens, add some minced onions and continue to cook until the onions go transparent.

After that, mix in some roughly chopped tomatoes and a consomme bouillon cube and cook the whole thing down so it loses some moisture before adjusting to taste with salt and pepper to finish the sauce off.

It was a simple sauce, but useful for a lot of things.

So just by cooking my homemade sausage, putting it between some bread, and slathering the tomato sauce on top, I can complete a Mukohda's Special Hot Dog.

I had the two orphans try it out, and they loved it.

Up until now, they had been stuck with the idea that meat should be meat, and bread should just be bread. The idea that foods should be served by themselves, as themselves, made it so that seeing the hot dog, which had a sausage in bread, had them reacting like they'd received a divine epiphany.

Now that I think about it, I've never seen anything sandwiched between bread in any food outside of what I've made.

Maynard and Enzo continued to gobble up their food while saying, "We'll have to try our hardest not to lose to you, Master!"

The bread I used for this test was something that I bought at a bakery in this town, so when the two of them told me that the orphanage had a lot of surplus wheat that they were using to make bread thanks to support from the lord of this territory, I had them introduce me to the orphanage so I could order my bread from them.

I made sure to request that they make it into the shape of a bread roll.

That was when I met the orphanage director and the nuns that staffed the place, and they were all kindly older ladies.

J-Just so you know, I wasn't secretly hoping for a young hot nun or anything, got it!

They seemed really busy and understaffed so I just said what I needed from them and left so I wouldn't be in their hair for too long, but I was thanked excessively for my order anyway.

Apparently they were grateful for any source of income.

You can't just tell me that. I'll.....

Normally a single piece of bread would cost 2 copper, so since I ordered the more expensive bread rolls, they cost 5 copper each. And I ordered 500 of them.

When I paid the 2 gold and 5 silver upfront, the director was so grateful she started praying on the spot, "May you walk with the blessings of the Goddess of Earth, Kisharle."

Little did she know, I already had Kisharle's blessing.

After that, I arranged to have the bread I ordered from the orphanage delivered to my house tomorrow morning.

All that was left was to cook and eat something for stamina tomorrow and to get to sleep early.

And offal was just perfect for that.

So today's dinner will be a highly nutritious chitterling hot pot!



The clay pot was bubbling nicely. I was using both my portable magic stove and the magic stove in the kitchen at the same time, with eight clay pots on eight burners. Inside the pots, I was cooking cabbage, bean sprouts, garlic chives, and the all-important dungeon beef offal. I also added plenty of sliced garlic and cayenne peppers, though since I had to be careful about Sui's tastes, I kept the peppers to a minimum.

It was too much trouble to make the soup from scratch, so I just bought the base from my Online Supermarket. I got soy sauce and miso-flavored soup base packs from a brand that was well known for producing true Hakata flavor. Both soup flavors would have been a whole lot of work to make from scratch, but when store-bought, they only needed to be poured straight into the pot. It was really nice to be both lazy and greedy for flavor like this.

The smell of bonito, seaweed, and soy sauce floated out of some pots, while the smell of miso floated out of others.

"Smells good..."

《**Hey, are you done yet?**》

《It's cooked enough, right? I'm hungry.》

《Masterrr, Sui is hungryyy...》 Being able to smell the food, it seemed like my familiars were quickly running out of patience.

"Okay, it should be done now. Hup..." I set some pots down in front of my familiars.

“This one is the soy sauce chitterling hot pot, and this one is miso. It’s hot, so be careful. Also, once the contents are finished, leave the soup. The finisher’ll be fantastic.” But I could tell my words were going in one ear and out the other. Fel and Dora-chan were already completely engrossed in using wind magic to cool down their portions, and Sui never cared about temperature in the first place. It simply engulfed the entire pot.

《Wow! This thing’s delish!》

《**Grrr... I want to eat already. I need to cool this thing faster.**》

《We’re at a disadvantage in times like this, aren’t we? I’m jealous of Sui since it just doesn’t care about heat.》

“Haha! I don’t know why you’re in such a hurry. The food won’t get up and walk away or anything, so just take your time and enjoy it.” *Now then, I guess I’ll get on top of their inevitable demands for more while I have time. There’s no way they’ll be satisfied with just what they have in front of them. Just bring the soup in the clay pot to a boil, throw in some cabbage, bean sprouts, garlic chives, offal, sliced garlic, and cayenne peppers. Then all you have to do is wait for everything to boil together. And in the meantime, I can eat my own food. I’ll start with the standard soy sauce flavor.*

Slrrrp

I swallowed the soup.

“Ahhh~, this really hits the spot. The flavors of the bonito and seaweed have mixed with the vegetables and the flavor of the offal, so the whole dish comes together really nicely.” *Next is the star of the dish.*

The chitterlings were jiggly and soft, but also bursting with flavor.

“Yep, it’s delicious. No complaints here.” The vegetables were also delicious, since they’d taken on the flavor of the soup.

“Whoops, I forgot. I should try some of the miso flavor, too.” So I started with some of the miso flavored soup.

Slrrrp

“The miso flavor’s delicious too~!” The miso flavor was deep, and with the

flavor of the offal added in, it was just as delicious as its soy sauce counterpart.

“They’re both good. Wow, it’s really hard to pick a favorite... Oh, never mind that, I need beer.” I bought some beer with my skill ahead of time, since I knew I’d need it.

Pssshhht Glugluglugluglug

“Aahhhh, that’s perfect!” After the draught of beer, I quickly turned back to the hot pot...

Then I took another gulp of beer.

“Ahh~, just the best.” As I was repeating that loop, Fel and the others demanded more.

So I put the extra servings I’d already started cooking in front of them.

While I was busy enjoying my own share of hot pot, Fel and the others had already gone through several servings, and...

“Okay. It’s about time for the finisher.” I prepared Chinese noodles for the soy sauce version’s finisher. The flavor of the soup clinging to noodles would be to die for.

As for the miso flavor, I wavered between udon or zosui, but I went with zosui in the end. So, I put rice into the leftover soup and mixed in a beaten egg. This would also be to die for, with the rich soup mixed in among the egg and rice.

It seemed like my familiars really liked the hot pot finisher, since they didn’t even leave a drop of soup behind and looked really satisfied afterward.



Once my familiars were full, they immediately went to bed.

As for me...

“It’s about time to make an offering to Demiurge. Let’s change things up and give him this too.” I made sure to continue making offerings to Demiurge while we were traveling, but I only ever fulfilled his requests, so it ended up always being some sort of sake and some premium kantsuma sets.

In my opinion, the hot pot we had tonight went really well with sake, so I

figured I might as well try sharing some with Demiurge. Demiurge had gotten completely hooked on sake, so I was sure that he'd also like what I'd made tonight.

And as for the most important part, the sake, I decided to choose out of the weekly rankings this time.

The first bottle I chose was one from Tochigi. It was a junmai daiginjo that was brewed slowly and carefully at a high temperature. Along with a fruity scent that reminded you of honeydew melons, it was said to be soft and mellow on the palate with a faint sweetness. Apparently, due to its recent popularity, supply wasn't able to meet demand and it was getting harder and harder to find.

The second bottle I chose was from the Fukui prefecture. It was also a junmai daiginjo that was matured for two years at 0 degrees Celsius. Supposedly, by letting it mature in such a cold environment, they were able to bring out a grapefruit-like fragrance to the sake. Also, it seemed that this particular line managed to win the gold medal at an American sake show three years running.

By the way, the final factor in my decision to buy this was the fact that it was part of a series that was not only used in numerous government-sponsored ceremonies, but was also one favored for serving to important people all around the world.

The third bottle I chose was one from Yamagata. I chose it because the name was unique and the label featured ukiyoe-style art. The sake itself was a rather dry junmai daiginjo, and apparently the series it was a part of was one that was born after three years of trial and error in an attempt to make a drier sake specifically. It had a fruity fragrance and a refreshing taste.

So, I prepared these three bottles and the usual premium kantsuma sets for the offering.

As for the hot pot, I made sure it was still piping hot, and planned to offer it clay pot and all so it could be consumed immediately.

I decided to default to the standard soy sauce flavor, and made sure to also prepare some Chinese noodles on the side for the finisher.

With this, everything should be OK.

After I lined everything up on a table in the living room...

“Please accept this offering, Lord Demiurge.”

<Oh ho! Thanks as always~. I was just starting to anticipate your next offering.>

“I have prepared for you the usual sake and kantsuma sets.....as well as a chitterling hot pot. It’s something I made myself, and I think it pairs well with sake. Please give it a try.”

<A hot pot! I’ve been treated to one before by your world’s god! I remember it was quite delicious~. And it was perfect with some sake. Oh, and the finisher that your people make with the leftover soup was also to die for.>

“I believe this will be different from what you were treated to, lord Demiurge, but this chitterling hot pot is pretty good too, if I say so myself. I’ve prepared Chinese noodles for this hot pot’s finisher, which of course is also delicious.”

<Ohh~? I see, I see. I’m looking forward to it.>

“It’s already been cooked, so please eat it at your leisure. As for the finisher, just add the noodles into the leftover soup when you want it and reheat.”

<You’re really attentive, aren’t you? Making it so that I can eat it immediately. That’s great. I’ll enjoy it now with some sake.> The sake and other offerings I’d lined up on the table disappeared after emitting some faint light.

<Oh, right, I should tell you something. The country that summoned you, Reijseger, was destroyed.>

“Huh? I’ve heard that they opened hostilities with their neighbor Marveil, but they already lost?”

<Indeed they did. Just as expected.>

According to Demiurge, while Reijseger was supposed to be the aggressor, they were on the receiving end of a fierce assault from the demonfolk country and Marveil at the same time. But they were still able to fight evenly with both sides due to sheer force of numbers. Those numbers were mostly made up of

enslaved poor people as well as beastfolk, elves, and dwarves. It seemed that they were enslaved by a magic tool called a 'Dominance Bracelet,' which was mentioned by Demiurge before. Due to that tool, they couldn't disobey the country at all.

<But slave fighters were basically disposable pawns to them. So the slaves all revolted, since they all thought, 'If we're going to die anyway, may as well deal a blow to the country that did this to us.' That basically decided the war, and Reijseger was quickly turned into rubble. The royal family were all beheaded, as were all the nobles of the royal faction that were said to greatly support the royal family's war policy.> So apparently the slaves were prepared to die to the magic tools they were forced to wear, since to them it would be better than dying in service to Reijseger.

It did seem like that country treated their slaves awfully. And judging from that king who swam in so much decadent luxury that he looked like a pig, the only ones benefiting from being in the kingdom were the royal family and the nobles.

Whether you called it karma or simply people getting their just desserts, what should have happened did happen in this case.

I did feel sorry for the slaves who were forced to fight, but I felt no such empathy for the destroyed Reijseger itself.

"So does that mean Marveil absorbed Reijseger's lands?"

<It does. The peasants are probably happy about that. You know, since they'd been squeezed dry for so long by Reijseger.> Apparently, the people of Reijseger had been exploited heavily by 'taxes.' That is, the people other than Reijseger's royal family, the nobles, and some affluent merchants.

I'd heard that the kingdom of Marveil was much like the kingdom of Leonhardt that I was in now, in that it wasn't discriminatory and life in it was relatively free. According to Demiurge, they didn't overly tax their citizens, so of course the people were happy about that.

<Oh right, last thing. About the three heroes that were summoned with you. They had a wedding in Marveil's capital and are now formally married. Also, they safely found the lesser elixir you wanted to give them in the dungeon I left

it in. Using that, Rio's arm is now back to normal. They're living very happy lives right now. It's quite nice. Ho! Ho! Ho!>

.....Did you really have to add all that extra info now?

It was great to hear that that Rio girl's arm was back to normal. I felt relieved after hearing it. Honestly, I was happy for them. I thought that their lives sounded really harsh, so I even entrusted 100 gold to Demiurge for them to find.

But...

Grrrrrrrrr, you handsome bastarrrrd... How dare you marry two beautiful girls! Aagghhhh I'm so jeeeaalllouuuussss! I'm crying tears of blood! DAAAMMMIIIIIT!! It's so frustrating. From the bottom of my heart, it's frustrating... Fine! The 100 gold will be my wedding present to you! You all better make sure you're happy! Sigh~ Meanwhile all I get are 3 familiars...

Of course, that wasn't a knock on my familiars.

After all, they're my precious comrades.

But still, I don't have a hint of females anywhere near me!

Where's customer service? I want to make a complaint to life's manager.

Even if I'm destined to not have any luck with women, this is too much.

I can't stop myself from wanting to curse handsome guys and normies to death.

Tch!

Fine, I'll just go enjoy the Meat Dungeon Festival by myself tomorrow.

Then I'll go and hug Sui to sleep to try and heal this wounded heart.



Gossip: The 3 Heroes *Marveil Capital Chapter*

“Heheheh...”

“Ehehe...” Kanon and Rio were grinning widely as they locked their arms in mine.

“What’s up with you two?”

“It’s obvious, isn’t it? Right Rio?”

“Yeah, Kanon.”

“We got married. Of course we’re happy.”

“Yeah. Of course we’re happy. You’re our husband now, Kaito.”

Hah, sure. But look at how cute you guys are too. Even I...

“I’m happy you two became my wives, too,” I said, and the two of them bashfully, but happily, laughed.

Of course, the two of them were wearing rings that I’d gifted them. They were even now glinting proudly on their fingers.

We were at a dungeon that was around ten minutes out from the capital.

At Kanon and Rio’s request, we visited the Goddess of Earth’s church the day we came to the capital and got married.

The Goddess of Earth’s church, where they were dead set on having the wedding, looked like an ancient Roman temple with its beautiful pillars and columns.

The ceremony we had there was just us donating some money to the church and then being led into the back so a priest could pray for us in front of a statue of the goddess. So even though it was called a wedding ceremony, it was really quick.

Even so, the change in how things felt between us was profound.

I could keenly sense in my heart that we were now married.

At any rate, all that happened the day before yesterday. And that night, ahem we harghmrgshsm.....

A-Anyway, a lot happened, so we had a rest the day afterward. Thus, today we decided to go to the dungeon.

After all, we weren't well off enough to take so many days off.

We'd used up a lot of our funds just getting to the capital, and the donation to the church cost a pretty penny too.

There's no rest for the poor.

So that was why we took a trip to the dungeon the capital was close to, but considering its location, we should have expected things to be how they were.

Even the entrance had a line of adventurers waiting to go in.

So we added ourselves to it.

"Looks like it'll take a little longer," Kanon said after taking a look at the length of the line.

"Oh well, it makes sense. This is the capital, after all."

"Yeah."

"I hope we get lots of drops."

"Me too. Our luck's gone up since we're married now, so maybe we'll make bundles."

Oh right, that priest did mention that, didn't he?

Apparently, going through the marriage ceremony in a church raises luck.

Well, only a little though.

But still, it was a boost, so I couldn't help but be a little expectant.

"I hope so. But you two make sure not to push yourselves too hard. Promise me, okay?"

"I know already. You should make sure to follow your own advice too, by the way. If you landed yourself in trouble, Kaito, I..."

"Yeah! If something were to happen to you..."

“Yeah, I know, I know. We’ll be together forever. So let’s put safety first from now on.”

““Agreed.””



“Hahh!” My longsword cleaved through an orc from shoulder to hip.

“Oiiinkkk!” The orc wailed in its death throes as it fell over.

Then, it disappeared, as if it was being sucked into the floor of the dungeon.

“Whew, it’s over.” The dungeon outside the capital was the most stereotypical type of dungeon, walled with stone and proceeding downwards underground. It basically screamed, “I am a dungeon,” and we were currently on the 8th floor, where we’d just cleared a room of orcs.

“There’s a lot of drops here, aren’t there? Guess we beat a lot of them.”

“You’re right. I’m used to fighting orcs, so going to this floor was a good choice.” The 8th floor of this dungeon played host to orcs, who had been our main prey this entire time, so we decided to keep earning money on this floor for now.

As for the option to continue to the deeper floors, we decided to talk that over later depending on how well we did on this floor.

“There’s quite a lot of orc meat, isn’t there?”

“Yeah. But there’s also...”

“Urgh... We really shouldn’t pick that stuff up...”

“Yeah. That’s...”

“Kaito, you pick it up.”

“Oh fine.” I picked up the drops that my wives would only refer to as ‘that.’

The things that Kanon and Rio were flat-out refusing to touch were orc testes. Apparently they were used to make medicine for virility, so they were worth quite a bit.

“We’ve got quite a few drops now, what do you two want to do?”

“We’re still good, let’s keep going for a while. We should earn as much as we can, after all. What do you think, Rio?”

“I agree. We won’t lose to some random orc, and we don’t have to worry about traps on this floor, either.” We’d researched this dungeon beforehand and learned that in this dungeon, traps only appeared starting from the 10th floor.

“If the two of you are fine with it, we can keep exploring. Let’s go.”

“Yeah.” Rio and I made to leave, but for some reason Kanon wasn’t moving.

“What’s wrong, Kanon?”

“Hmm... Kaito, Rio, would the both of you come here for a second?” Kanon said, so the two of us went over to her.

“Look there. On the right side in the back, doesn’t something seem off?” She continued, pointing to the back of the room.

I strained my eyes to try and spot what Kanon was talking about.

“I don’t really see anything...”

“Me neither...” Both Rio and I reacted the same way.

Even so, Kanon didn’t seem mollified.

“I’m gonna go take a look,” she said and headed for the spot in question.

Rio and I doubtfully followed after Kanon.

“It’s around here...” Kanon said as she started to touch and search the area of the wall she had pointed out earlier.

“See, there’s nothing there. It’s just a figment of...” I couldn’t finish my sentence.

A section of wall that Kanon touched crumbled and broke.

And it revealed a magic circle around 10cm in diameter.

“Th-This is...”

“See? I told you there was something off with this spot!” Kanon sounded a little smug as she spoke.

“This is a magic circle, right? So we just feed some magic power into it?”

“Probably. Lemme try.”

“Ah, wait a second! Kanon!” I was too late to stop her. Kanon had already touched the magic circle.

Rumble rumble rumble rumble

A section of the wall slid to the side, revealing another room beyond it.

“Is this one of those hidden rooms?” All three of us hesitantly peeked inside.

“Ah! Kanon, Kaito, look, in the back! Isn’t that wooden box there a treasure chest?” I looked where Rio mentioned, and she was right. There was a wooden box left there.

“You’re right! That’s definitely a treasure chest. Let’s go open it!” Kanon said as she got up to move towards it, but I stopped her.

“Wait!! There might be a trap! We should be careful here.”

“He’s right, Kanon.”

“Awwwww whaaaat? But this is just the 8th floor! Didn’t we learn that there were no traps on this floor?”

“True, but this is a hidden room. We can’t say for sure that the normal rules apply.”

“Exactly. We have the Appraisal skill, so we should use that first.”

“Alright, I get it. Then, Appraisal.Yep, no traps.” I appraised it myself, and...

【Treasure Chest】

A treasure chest. There are no traps.

“Yep. Looks fine to me.”

“Yeah.” Rio nodded.

Looks like she appraised it too.

“Then let’s open it.”

“Can I do the honors?” Since she was the one who found the room, I let Kanon have the fun.

When she slowly lifted the lid...

“There’s some kind of old bag... and is this a potion?” Inside there was a slightly filthy bag and a small bottle.

“Let’s check inside the bag first.” I picked up the bag and peeked inside.

“Ooohhh!”

“It’s gold coins!!”

“Looks like there’s 100 of them! Woohoo!” All three of us were excited after looking inside.

Just the contents of the bag should tide us over for a while.

“This one’s next. It’s probably a potion like Kanon says, but we should be appraising it anyway.”

【Elixir (Lesser)】

(Specialty of Sui ※ concealed) An elixir (lesser). Being of lesser grade, it won’t extend one’s lifespan. However, it will heal many injuries, including loss of limb, and works on all illnesses.

“This...!”

“It says it’s an elixir...”

“Elixir...”

“Rio! This is perfect!”

“Rio, we can heal your arm!”

“M-My arm...”

“Yeah! Now you can be healed, Rio!”

“*Snff* G-Good for you, Rio! I’m so... so glad...!”

“Kanon! *Snff*” The three of us hugged and cried joyfully together.

Once we’d calmed down some, I gave the elixir to Rio.

“Try it now, Rio. If I remember right, for wounds you should drink half of it and pour the other half on the wound itself.”

“A-Are you sure? If you think about it, we could probably live our whole lives off of the money we’d get from selling this...”

“What’re you being so hesitant for! Of course we’re sure!”

“Yeah, Rio! We got money right here, too. It’s not enough to live off of forever, but it’s enough that we won’t have trouble for a good while.”

“Okay. Then... Ah!” Rio stopped just before actually drinking it.

“What? What’s wrong?”

“Umm, if I drink this will I heal right away? If that happens, won’t it be weird when we leave?”

“Ah, right! Rio’s got a point. There’s a ton of adventurers around here, and I don’t know if any of them would remember us, but if they do they’d definitely know that we found a treasure chest.”

“Yeah. I’m thinking that it would be a lot of trouble if we attracted the attention of some weird or bad people.”

“You’re right. People are way more cunning than monsters. We know that better than anyone,” I said, and both Kanon and Rio nodded.

“Now that I think about it, maybe we shouldn’t use the elixir while we’re at the capital. Since the employees at the inn know our names and everything. The other customers there have seen us too, and if Rio shows up with a new arm the next day they’ll definitely know something’s up.”

“True.”

“Yeah. I think you’re right, Kaito.”

“Then...” We decided to sell off the orc drops from today, but keep the hidden room and treasure chest an absolute secret.

We also decided to leave the capital tomorrow.



A day after, we left the capital.

We traveled along the roads, and for the moment there wasn't anyone near us.

"Alright, around here should be good."

"Yeah. We're a ways from the capital, so I think this should be fine. Rio, drink it."

"Okay." Rio took the Elixir out from her Item Box and downed half of it all at once.

Then, she poured the other half on the stump of her left arm.

When she did, Rio's body glowed faintly, but her remaining left arm glowed strongly.

"Rio! Are you alright?!"

"Rio!!" Rio stopped glowing after about ten seconds.

"Kaito, Kanon... this..."

"Rio! Your arm!"

"Your arm's back!" Rio's arm had grown back.

"My... My arm... It's back! Th-Thank you so much, you two." The three of us once again hugged each other and had a happy cry.



Chapter 5: Meat Dungeon Festival

The day of the Meat Dungeon Festival.

Both sides of the main road were packed tightly with stalls.

And the streets themselves were crammed full of people, people, and more people who were there to experience said stalls.

They'd come from both inside and outside Rosenthal. The Meat Dungeon Festival was certainly livening up the town.

"Thanks~!" I sent off a customer who bought a hot dog.

"We're here, bro!"

"Oh, Luis! It's been a while." Luis and his party had come over to my stall.

"I heard you were way out in the middle of nowhere. Man, they weren't kidding."

"Well, yeah. I was late in applying, so it's only natural though." My stall was located on the very end of the city of stalls that had been erected for the Meat Dungeon Festival.

Well, rather than a stall, it was more like I just brought out my grill and started serving food off of it.

By the way, my familiars were napping in an empty space behind me. They complained endlessly about not being able to tour the stalls, but I managed to talk them down by saying that today would be the only day I was doing this. It was a little scary how determined my familiars sounded when they said, "We will be eating everything in our tour of the stalls over the next few days."

"You really don't get many customers out here, do you? Compared to the stalls in better spots."

"Yeah, but I still get a fair few." I personally preferred this level of business, where I could still deal with customers one-on-one and maybe have a chat.

“Sure, sure. That looks really good, though. So you put a sausage in the bread you bought from us?”

“Yep. I just take one of these nicely grilled sausages and put it in the bread I bought from you guys, then add this tomato sauce on top.”

“Gulp...” Luis and the others all had their eyes glued on the sausages.

“Looks good...”

“Hey, these are for sale so you aren’t getting any. If you want some, pay up,” I said, and they all looked crestfallen.

But I really couldn’t just give these away for free.

Just buy it.

“Yeah, thought so. What do you guys want to do?” Luis asked the others.

“Big bro’s food looks good, but I really want to try other places too...”

“But big bro cooks really really good.”

“Yeah...”

“It’s really hard to decide, isn’t it...?”

“So, how much is it?”

Oh ho?

“Hey bro, how much are these?”

“These? They’re 6 iron coins for one.”

“6 iron coins? Hmm~... That’s kind of expensive.”

“Huh? Really? It’s bread and sausage. I thought this was a pretty good price.”

“Well yeah, when you put it like that. There’s both bread and meat so it seems like it’d fill you up. Hmmm... Okay! I’ll take one, bro!” Luis ended up ordering one.

“Sure. Thanks for the business.” I took the 6 iron coins from Luis.

I took a nicely grilled sausage, stuck it between the bread I’d bought from the

orphanage, and slathered tomato sauce on top.

“Wow! Looks good.”

“It doesn’t just look good. It *is* good. Try it.” Luis took a big bite into the hot dog.

“Woww~!” Luis looked really happy as he ate. The others looked like they ran out of willpower after seeing that, and they all ordered hot dogs one after the other.

Then, they started chowing down right then and there.

“Delicious!”

“That was money well spent!”

“I never thought just sausage in bread could taste this good.”

“Stuuuuupid. This sausage itself is amazing. It snaps, and the inside is so juicy!”

“You’re the stupid one. It’s true that the sausage is great, but this red sauce on top really brings it all together. The combination is why it’s so delicious.”

Huh. These orphans have surprisingly sharp palates. I guess it’s because we’re in the meat dungeon town?

Luis and the others continued their friendly bickering while they enjoyed their hot dogs. The sight seemed to have worked as some sort of advertisement, as a nearby elf man walked over to order one.

“Give me one please.”

“Yessir!” I took his 6 iron coins and handed him a hot dog.

The elegant-looking elf opened his mouth wide and chomped into the hot dog.

He closed his eyes and chewed slowly so as to savor the taste before gulping it down.

The next instant, his eyes snapped open wide, and he wolfed down the rest of it.

Having finished his hot dog in but a mere moment, he sighed.

“Oh my~, that was absolutely incredible. It’s because I get to encounter unprecedented new foods like this that I can’t stop coming to this Meat Dungeon Festival~!” The elf said with a smile. “May I have another?”

“Sure thing.” I took the payment and handed the elf another hot dog.

The elf once again bit into it.

And...

“Yeah, that’s great. This sausage is so juicy, and I can tell it’s seasoned with not only salt, but pepper too. Also, this stewed tomato you put on top has a perfect amount of acidity, which binds the sausage and bread perfectly,” the elf muttered. “Ah! Sorry. I don’t know if you know this already, but elves are all really obsessed with food. In my case, I have a habit of just muttering my impressions of what I eat to myself.”

Oh right, elves are really picky eaters. Yeah sure, I know. I mean, I already know a certain Adventurer’s guild guildmaster and a certain cool beauty of an adventurer from an A-ranked party. Well to be fair, the two of them are more gluttons than picky eaters.

After some conversation, I found out that the elf man’s name was Gabriel, and that he was a traveling merchant. I also learned that he’d been attending this Meat Dungeon Festival since its inception.

Every year? That’s some dedication.

“I always wonder what I should do around this time of year, but I always end up here.” Normally, he traveled and did business between the capital and a town called Bischoff, which was about the same distance to the capital as Rosenthal was. But whenever it came time for the festival, he always ended up stopping here for a breather.

“I know other elves. I guess it really is true that all elves are weak to good food.”

“Hahaha, we are elves, after all.” I continued talking to Gabriel, and...

“Ohhhh, is that why there are so many elves in town this time of year~?” Luis,

who'd been eavesdropping on our whole conversation, said.

"Oh yeah. You always see a lot of elves around during the festival, don't you?" Luis's friends nodded.

Now that they mention it, I can see elves here and there, too.

"You can try a whole bunch of good food during the Meat Dungeon Festival, after all. It's no wonder we get drawn here." Apparently elves tended to gather here, aiming for new good food.

It was scary the lengths elves were willing to go for food.

Still, it's not like I didn't have experience with my own set of incorrigible gluttons.

"I was right to come this year, too. Since I got to have this. I'll come tomorrow, too!" Gabriel stated his intention to visit on the second day as well.

But...

"Umm, sorry, but I'm only opening this stall today."

"Whaaaaaat?! N-No way..."

I don't think it's so awful that you need to cry that hard, Gabriel...

"Ah! Right! Then please wait a second," he said before rifling around in his Item Box.

I guess it's only natural for elves like Gabriel to have Item Boxes, since they're so gifted with magic.

"There it is! Can you stuff as many hot dogs into this as you can?" Gabriel handed me a small basket.

I said small, but it still looked like it could fit about ten hot dogs inside.

"Are you sure? That'll be quite a lot. Also, even if you have an Item Box, this is still perishable food, so if you don't eat them soon..." Unless he had an Item Box that stopped time like mine, it was a bad idea for food storage.

"It'll be fine. With this many, I can probably finish them by tomorrow."

All this by tomorrow...

With that, I no longer had any reason to refuse, so I took the basket and filled it with hot dogs.

I was right, the basket fit ten hot dogs perfectly.

“Here you go.”

“Thank you very much! Well then,” Gabriel said, already biting into another hot dog as he left.

Then, an hour later — — —

“Huh? Wh-What the hell...” For some reason, my store was swamped with elves.

At first, I’d simply noticed that it was getting a little busier than usual so I dealt with it, but at some point the swarm of elves started growing exponentially...

I had my hands full just making hot dogs and taking payment.

I somehow managed to deal with the sudden influx of customers by having Luis and the others help, since until now they’d been loitering near my stall with nothing to do.



As I was busy cooking up a mountain of sausages, I heard the impressions of the elves who were eating my hot dogs.

“Gabriel was right. This is great!”

“I came because I’m staying with Gabriel and he said it was really good. He was right!”

“Yeah, I heard about this from Gabriel too. You really can rely on a fellow elf’s info~!”

.....*IT WAS GABRIEL!!* I appreciated him spreading word of my stall, but this was too much.

I wonder if all elves just want to try stuff immediately when they hear it’s good?

I mulled that over in my head as I silently continued to cook hot dogs.

“*Sigh* Somehow managed to finish...” I finally managed to get through all the elves’ orders.

Luis and the others who I hired as emergency help also looked exhausted. They really helped out this time. Without them around I’d have been in trouble.

As I considered upping their pay, an older guy called out to me.

“Hey bro. The stuff those elves are really enjoying is from your stall, right?” There were lots of elves still hanging around enjoying their hot dogs.

“Well, yeah.”

“Thought so! Give me one too. Oh man, if you can entrance the elves’ discerning palate, then you’ve got to have something good. I was so curious!” This guy buying his hot dog was the signal for another huge wave of customers to come.

They were all like the older guy who saw the elves eating and got lured over.

“Give me one too!”

“Me too!”

“One here as well!”

“I want two!”

“W-Woah! H-Hey, get to work you guys!” I called Luis and the others back to work and somehow managed to deal with this wave too.

“Okay that’s it! We’re sold out! Sorry, but we’re closing!” I sold off my last hot dog.

All the sausages that I had Maynard and Enzo help me prepare were gone, even though I thought I'd made extra.

“Aagghh, I’m so tired.”

“Me too, bro.” Luis’s party all silently nodded in agreement.

“You guys really helped out today, so I’ll pay you extra. 2 silver a person.”

“Really?!”

“Of course. Here.” I paid each of them and watched as their faces lit up.

“Great! Now we can eat!”

""""""Yeah!""""""

You guys were still that energetic? So materialistic.

“Well then, later bro~!” Luis and his friends still seemed hyped as they disappeared into the streets to enjoy the Meat Dungeon Festival.

“Now then, we should go home too.” I called out to Fel and the others, but Fel sounded unhappy.

«Hey, have you not forgotten something?»

“Hm?”

《Food. Food!》

“Ahh! Sorry, sorry. I was so busy I forgot.” After the coming of the elves I was so swamped with customers I didn’t have time to think about my familiars and their lunch.

«Geez. You know, it was hard on us having to smell that food with how hungry we were!» Dora-chan was also angry.

《Master, Sui is so hungry...》 Even Sui was sounding pretty sad and pathetic.

“Sorry, everyone. Really! I’ll buy you anything you want from these stalls to make up for it. Okay?” I put my hands together in supplication and bowed to my familiars.

《**Hmph! Of course you will!**》

《Yeah!》

《Sui will eat lots!》 After that, I was made to spend oodles of money and run every which way to satisfy my familiars, and the first day of the Meat Dungeon Festival was over.



On the second day of the Meat Dungeon Festival, once again the streets of Rosenthal were overflowing with people. It was a huge party.

《**We are going to eat our hearts out today.**》

《Of course we are!》

《Sui will eat looooooooooots and looooooooooooooooooots!》

.....It’s fine that you’re all excited to eat, but it’s scary given how much you all eat normally. Not to mention how much you all ate yesterday, too.

A significant chunk of my wallet went towards appeasing my familiars yesterday.

“Didn’t you all eat a bunch yesterday, too?”

《**Yesterday was yesterday. And that was only the beginning.**》

《Exactly. There’s still lots of stalls we didn’t get to yesterday, too!》

《Hehehe~, we tried lots of stuff!》 Apparently the feast they had yesterday was just a sneak preview of things to come.

《**Okay, let us start from the skewer stalls. Dora, Sui, come.**》

《Alright! I’m gonna stuff myself today too!》

《Meat~!》 They said before immediately diving in and approaching a stall selling dungeon beef skewers.

The older guy manning the stall didn’t mind the monsters that suddenly

appeared at his stall and just kept cooking.

I bet he's like one of those standard stubborn old men who takes pride in how good he is at his work.

The skewers the guy was cooking had two large pieces of meat on each of them.

The dungeon beef was sizzling in its own juices, and that smell along with the spicy aroma of its sauce, which probably had dried herbs or something in it, made the whole thing seem really good.

《**Hey, I want ten of these.**》

《I'll take five.》

《Sui wants 20!》

《**Hey, Sui, settle for ten. We have a lot of stalls to get to.**》

《Ah! You're right! Okay, Sui will do as uncle Fel says since we'll be eating at lots of other places! Yeah, Sui will have ten!》

"Sure, whatever. Then, I'll go order... Excuse me, can I get 26 skewers?" I added an extra one for myself.

The spicy smell had me craving one too.

"You got it." I exchanged money for the just-finished skewers.

Then, I found an empty bit of space so I could take the meat off of the skewers and serve it to Fel and the others in their special bowls.

They immediately started digging in and quickly finished it all off.

《**It was okay.**》

《Yeah. And the tiny bit of spice in it made me even hungrier.》

《Meat is so good! Sui wants more and more and more!》

"You're all way too fast. I'm still only halfway through."

《**Why are you wasting time like this? Hurry and eat. You are making us wait.**》

"You can complain all you want. This skewer's pretty big and I can't eat as fast

as all of you.”

Dora-chan took Fel’s side, saying, 《Yeah! Hurry up!》 Even Sui was just staring at me, so with no allies anywhere, I had to endure eating while being pestered and hurried along.

I wasn’t sure what kind of herb was used here, but the sauce was tingly and spicy. It matched really well with the meat, which was pure red with no fat to it.

However, while it was good, my enjoyment of it was halved because I was being badgered the whole time.

《**Good, you are done.**》

《Next! Next!》

《Meat~!》 As soon as they confirmed I’d finished, my familiars once again charged for their next target.

They just don’t get that good food is best savored slowly... Looks like this’s gonna be a long day...

《**Hey, this one is next. Hurry it up.**》 Fel commanded through telepathy.

“Yeah, yeah. I’m coming.” I jogged over to where Fel and the others were.



After going through more than ten stalls following Fel’s and the other’s desires, I finally came upon a familiar face.

“Oh, there’s Maynard and Enzo.”

“**Hm? Oh, those whelps that came to the mansion earlier. I believe you taught them how to cook entrails?**”

“Yeah. They’ve got quite a line. Looks like they’re doing well. That’s great to see.” The line at Maynard and Enzo’s stall told me that they were prospering and on track for their goal.

Then, Dora-chan muttered something while looking at them. 《Guts, huh? They don’t look appetizing, but they were pretty good, weren’t they?》

Sui, having heard that, bounced up and down as it replied, 《It was good!》

“...Hm, then shall we try the innards that those whelps have cooked?” Fel said haughtily as he sauntered away towards Maynard and Enzo’s stall, clearly intending to ignore the line.

《I want to eat too.》

《Sui too!》 My other two familiars said as they followed Fel.

“W-W-Wai-Wai-... Hey, come on, wait a second!” I grabbed on to Fel and Dora-chan’s tails in a panic to hurriedly hold them back.

“Sui, no! Stop!” Sui alone continued to bounce forward, so I had to call out to it to stop it.

“Why are you stopping us?” Fel said unhappily.

“Don’t ‘why’ me! There’s a line! If you want some you have to wait!”

“Mrr, do we really have to? How annoying.”

“Then do you want to go somewhere else?”

“Mnn... I am now craving innards after remembering that taste. I must have their food.”

“Then line up. Come on, let’s go.”

“Fine.” I lined up along with Fel and the others.

After we did, several people started flashing glances towards us.

Is it because I have Fel and the others with me? We’ve been here ten days already, so Fel should be pretty well known around here by now.

“Do we still have to wait?”

“We just lined up. Actually wait a little.”

Geez, as if we’d immediately get to order just by lining up.

“.....Ah.”

“What?”

“Fel, telepathy! Use telepathy!” Flustered, I whispered urgently into Fel’s ear.

I’d made it a policy for Fel to use telepathy as much as possible in places with

people, but right then Fel was talking normally.

《Mnn, oh, right.》

“Don’t ‘oh, right’ me! Come on~!”

It may have been okay in Karelina, but come on, it’ll totally cause a huge commotion here. So I guess all the people who’re glancing at us heard our conversation. Fel wasn’t speaking especially loud, so we got away with just a few people here, but...

Glance

Some of the glances sent our way were singling me out in particular.

Crap!

They were still doing it.

In this case... I’m just gonna have to pretend I don’t notice, huh? Yeah...

After a while of waiting while dealing with all that...

“Sorry for the wait. Next please!”

“You guys are doing pretty well for yourselves.”

““Master!””

“I came to try out your food.” After a small conversation, I heard from them that everybody shrank away after first hearing that they were serving intestines.

But eventually, some curious people tried it out...

And after others saw people exclaim about how delicious it was while wolfing the food down, they started to get more and more business until things grew to where they were today.

Since they were using normally reviled entrails, the tomato stew was only 4 iron coins, and the chitterling skewers were only 3 iron coins. Part of their success was that they were able to sell their food so cheaply.

Yeah, in cases like these having someone actually try it is always best.

If it’s good, people will start buying on their own.

“I’m happy for you two.”

““Thanks!!”” Maynard and Enzo seemed full of vim and vigor seeing their stall so prosperous.

“For now, give me three people’s worth of tomato stew. Also, 26 skewers.” I handed them my familiar’s bowls from my Item Box and the payment for their food.

Since I was getting pretty full, I was only having a skewer.

《**Hey, I want more than that.**》

“No no, there’s a line. You can’t just buy up all the food for yourself. I can make some too, later, so you three control yourselves. Got it?”

《**Mrr, fine. But you *will* be making this soon.**》

“Yeah, yeah, I know.” While that conversation was happening, the food I ordered was finished.

“Here you go, Master.”

“Thanks. You two, keep doing your best.” I took the food and left Maynard and Enzo’s stall.

Then, as always, I found a bit of empty space to feed my familiars.

《**This stew is not bad, though it still falls somewhat short of yours.**》

《Yeah. This is pretty good.》

《It’s delicious! But there’s not a lot...》 I ordered a serving for each of them, but it seemed like that wasn’t enough for their stomachs.

Next are the chitterling skewers.

I pulled the organ meat off the skewers and served it to my familiars in their dishes. All three of them just started wolfing the food down.

I should try it too.

I bit into the skewer, and the juices burst out into my mouth.

The ‘ultimate sauce’ Maynard and Enzo were talking about was salt-based.

They must have used some type of herb that was like lemongrass, since there

was a nice and refreshing taste to it that cleared the sinuses.

“Ohh? This is pretty good. With this flavoring, even oily and fatty offal didn’t weigh heavily on the tongue.”

You can really tell they’re aiming to be chefs.

《**It is serviceable. Those whelps are fairly skilled.**》

《You said it. I wasn’t expecting much, but this was surprisingly okay.》

《It was good!》 Even my spoiled gluttonous gourmands gave it a passing mark.

“That means their stall is pretty much a shoo-in to place, huh?” Even though I’d only taught them a little, I was still rooting for them.

《**Okay, next stall.**》

《Yeah!》

《Meat, meat~!》

“We’ve gone through quite a number already. Do you guys seriously still want to eat?”

《**Of course.**》

《I can keep going!》

《Sui wants looooots more~!》 And so the gluttonous trio once again dove into the fray.

“*Sigh* What appetites...” Exasperated, I followed after them.



In the end, we visited close to 30 stalls that day. My familiars certainly had their fill of meat dishes. After having a feast of meat, meat, and more meat, Fel and Dora-chan finally seemed happy and had swollen bellies full to bursting. Even Sui, who didn’t change on the outside, was seemingly satisfied as it slept soundly in its usual spot in my bag as we went home.

《**We ate everything we could today. It only affirms that meat really is great. We will be feasting tomorrow, as well.**》

《Yep! Let’s fill ourselves up tomorrow, too!》

《Mmnnmnnn... meat~.....》I almost thought that they'd finally eaten themselves out after all they had today, but the gluttonous trio continued to impress, I guess.

I suppose we'll be going around stalls tomorrow too... Urp..... Yeah, I think I'm done with meat after today.



Entering the third day and final of the Meat Dungeon Festival, the town was bustling even still, with people crowding around to try the food.

《**Great. We are going to eat this town to pieces today.**》

《Yeah! Gonna have a meat feast again today!》

《Sui will eat tons and tooooooons of meat today~!》My gluttonous carnivores were ready and raring to stuff themselves again today.

Same as yesterday, my familiars were still in the mood to tour stalls.

That being said, I was paid a visit by one of the Merchant's guild's employees this morning, begging for me to reopen my stall.

Apparently rumors of my hot dogs abounded, and there were a lot of requests being made at the Merchant's guild.

The employee begged me over and over, but unfortunately, I'd never planned to be open for more than one day so I didn't have anything to sell.

After all, the sausages I'd prepared all sold out on the first day.

I still had some bread rolls from the orphanage left, but I couldn't serve hot dogs with just bread.

Even if I wanted to make more sausages, that would take a lot of time, too...

While I felt sorry for him, I had to refuse.

It definitely wasn't because Fel was right behind me, glaring holes into the back of my head and repeating, 《**Refuse,**》 over and over in my head through telepathy.

.....Probably not, anyway.

At any rate, I couldn't do something I was utterly unprepared for, so I declined. The employee wilted in disappointment, but there was nothing to be done about it.

After that exchange, Fel seemed extra motivated for some reason, though that might have just been my imagination. He was saying there was a stall that caught his eye yesterday and stuff, too.

Still...

"You all ate enough meat yesterday to cause anyone heartburn. I'm surprised you aren't tired of it," I muttered, and Fel with his sharp ears reacted immediately.

《**How could you think that? Meat is delicious.**》

《Why're you just stating the obvious, Fel? Also, I only found this out after following this guy, but the meat that humans eat has so many flavors, it's great. I just never get bored.》

《**Dora is correct. Humans are foolish, but I can appreciate their skill for making food.**》

《Yep.》

"Wow. You two sure are up on that high horse."

《**I am on no horse. I am simply higher than all of you.**》

《Exactly. Since we're so strong.》 I felt exasperated seeing Fel and Dora-chan's groundless smug expressions, but Sui interrupted by telepathically saying something.

《Hey, hey, master, let's hurry and go have meat!》

"Ah, you're right. Let's go then." Geez, Sui's the only nice and honest one of the bunch.

《**There is a stall I have had my eye on since yesterday. We will start there.**》

"Sure, sure."

Fel gleefully moved for the stall he talked about, so the rest of us followed.

The stall we arrived at was near the center of the whole festival. Apparently it

served dungeon pork skewers. The meat on the skewers was a thick cut of dungeon pork belly that was clearly bursting with juices even from a single glance, and the ones being served out looked perfectly cooked.

The skin, meat, and fat were neatly layered, almost like the kind of pork you see in food advertisement pictures. The fat dripping off the cooked pork belly gave off an indescribable aroma. And as soon as they were cooked, the chef at the stall would quickly grate some rock salt on top.

Gulp— — —

After yesterday I was feeling pretty tired of meat, but I just couldn't resist this.

"Come on, try some bro!" The kindly-looking stall owner, who had to be almost 40, called out to me.

"Do you just use salt for flavoring?"

"Yeah. Just salt. But I carefully picked out this dungeon pork and I gave it juuuust the right amount of salt. It's good, trust me~!" It was only flavored with salt, but the simplicity gave it all the more impact.

Even though all the other stalls were trying to use sauces to bring out their own little flavors, this one really stood out.

Yeah, looking at this I'm pretty confident I can trust his eye.

《**Hey, hurry up and buy it.**》

"Sure, sure. How many do you want?"

《**This looks really delicious. For now, buy 30.**》

"What about Dora-chan and Sui?"

《I'll have... hmmm... well, there'll be more after this, so I'll take ten.》

《Sui wants the same as Uncle Fel, 30!》

So, 70 for all of them? This guy's really confident in his food... I want to try one too so I'll add one for myself.

"Excuse me, can I have 71 skewers?"

“Oh ho! That’s quite a lot!”

“Haha, it’s for my picky familiars.”

“Thank ye kindly!” I exchanged money for the delicious-looking skewers.

I hurried to move to an open space, and all of us started on the food as fast as we could.

“Amazing!” It was a simple flavor since it was just salt, but that meant that there was nothing in the way of the dungeon pork’s natural taste.

I forgot to ask where he got his rock salt from, but it was a mildish salt that wasn’t too strong, so it went really well with the dungeon pork and drew out its natural flavor even more.

《**Hm, as always I have an eye for this.**》

《Man this is good!》

《So goooood!》 My familiars all loved it, and quickly put the food down.

《**Okay, next.**》

《Yep! Let’s go there now!》

《Sui will eat lots more meat!》 It seemed that starting with such good food only served to rev the gluttonous trio’s appetite engines. They immediately set off for another stall.



“Whew~, I ended up eating a lot today, too.” Being exposed to the sight and smell of all that food, my meat exhaustion flew out the window.

《**Indeed. This festival is a good one. It is only too bad that today was the last day.**》

《Yeah, we got to eat our fill of so much meat, after all. They should keep it up longer.》

《It’d be nice if we could eat like this eeevery day~!》 My familiars seemed truly disappointed that the Meat Dungeon Festival was over after today. Even though they managed to fully take advantage of the last two days...

We'd come to the place where they were going to announce the top five stalls, which was the main event of this Meat Dungeon Festival. It was a square that was smack dab in the center of the city made of stalls that was erected inside Rosenthal.

There was a small stage made in the square, and the surrounding space was buried in a crowd of participants waiting with bated breath to hear the results.

I made sure to get my votes in before coming here. Still, only my votes counted since I was the only human in my group, and they went to that simple but amazingly tasty dungeon pork skewer stall. I'd asked for my familiars' opinions, but they each had their own tastes and it was hard to come to an agreement. In the end, we all agreed that my favorite, the simple skewers stall, was good enough, so I was allowed to vote for it.

Maynard and Enzo's stall was delicious, but well, I didn't want to play favorites.

Sorry you two, I apologized to them in my head.

Anyway, since managing to place in the top five pretty much automatically put any store in the major leagues, everybody here was looking forward to the results.

While all that was happening, a slightly chubby man made his way to the stage.

Oh. Looks like it's about time to start.

"Uhhh, my name is Reinholdt, the sub-guildmaster of the Merchant's guild here, and I have the honor of being the chairman for this festival. Pleased to meet you all. This year's Meat Dungeon Festival was blessed with good weather, and we've managed to conclude the final day with no real problems..."

"Come on! Tell us the results already!!" The sub-guildmaster, who was the chairman of this event, had just started his speech when some impatient person in the crowd cut in.

There were others who shouted in agreement, too.

I guess that was only natural since he seemed like he'd started rambling.

"Ahem! Uhhh, it seems like there are many who are impatient to hear the results of our traditional top five announcement, so I will do that now. Starting from fifth place. Fifth is..... the stall run by two first-time participants, the young Maynard and Enzo!" The announcement was met with cheers and clapping.

S-Seriously.....? I did mention that they could attempt to place, but those two actually did it.

Maynard and Enzo looked really excited as they got up on stage.

"Please say a few words. Starting from you, Maynard."

"We were pretty confident, but it's still such a surprise to actually place... This is all thanks to our Master! And thank you to all of you who voted for us!"

"Then next is you, Enzo."

"Thank you, everyone. And to our Master: We did it!"

"RAAAHHHH!!"

Once again, a storm of cheering and applause kicked up.

Awww that was nice. It was worth teaching them just for this.

"Next, in fourth place....." Each announcement was met with cheers and applause, and everyone held feelings of joy and sadness after each one. The announcement of the Meat Dungeon Festival's best five ended in a storm of wild enthusiasm.

As an aside, every single one of the top five, including Maynard and Enzo's stall, were ones that passed muster with my familiars.

First was surprisingly the stall selling dungeon beef skewers with that special herb sauce.

Second was a stall selling dungeon pork steaks with a special sauce. Third was a stall that sold cockatrice skewers coated in a thick and rich special sauce. And fourth was the stall that I voted for, that had the simply-seasoned dungeon pork skewers.

All the stalls we visited during our tour were at my familiar's whims. To think that we tried every single one that placed... The senses of my gluttonous trio were not to be underestimated.

"Now then, it's about time to go back." We left the square, which was still bursting with excitement.

The Meat Dungeon Festival———.

It was surprisingly fun to gorge on different stalls and stuff.

"Hey, let's come back next year."

《**Indeed. We are definitely coming back next year.**》

《Definitely.》

《We'll come again~!》

Chapter 6: Let's Go Home

The Meat Dungeon Festival was over, so now we were entertaining the notion of going back to Karelina. My familiars, especially Fel, strongly wanted to dive into the dungeon one last time for meat, but I had to put the kibosh on that. While my Item Box could fit the extra meat, it was already being taken over by all the drops from that dungeon my familiars got.

Since I had way too much meat, I was thinking that I could use some as a souvenir for all my servants waiting for me in Karelina.

Let's make a feast for them using the dungeon pork and dungeon beef once I'm back. It might also be nice to have everyone come to the Meat Dungeon Festival with us next year.

So just like that, it was decided for us to return to Karelina, and I began preparations.

As always, first was preparing the food that we'd eat on the way. All of my familiars are huge eaters, so I needed to make thorough preparations on that front. While it was possible for me to cook food on the spot, it was much easier for me to prepare food beforehand. And so, I started diligently cooking in preparation for our trip.

I made everyone's favorite karaage and pork cutlet, as well as chicken cutlet and hamburger steak cutlet. Basically the whole gamut of fried foods. I also made hamburger steak, ginger fried pork, teriyaki chicken, and extra-meat stir fries. I stocked up on all our usual foods, but I used the meat dungeon drops this time since I had so many.

After two days of preparation, I received a visit from Maynard and Enzo.

"Thank you so, so much, Master!"

"Thank you very much!" Maynard and Enzo were flooding me with gratitude.

While they had the confidence to do well, apparently they still hadn't been sure if they'd make it into the top five.

“We made it into fifth place on our first try. It’s like a dream.”

“Yeah. Ever since we won, we’ve been really busy talking to all the stores that want to recruit us.” I was told that they actually wanted to come thank me immediately, but they were flooded with so many recruitment offers from different places that they were too busy to leave the orphanage until now.

“Well, you did place fifth on your first try. I bet they expect a lot out of you two.”

“That’s great, but...”

“Yeah. To tell you the truth...” According to them, they wanted to try going into business for themselves.

Apparently, while their plan was to place in the festival so they could get employed somewhere and train there, while they were running their stall during the festival, their opinions changed.

“This way we’ll be able to cook and serve what we want, and we can also hear the opinions of our customers directly.”

“Yeah. I was really happy serving something I thought was great and seeing the customers so happy. When I experienced that, I started thinking it would be better to have our own place instead of working somewhere else...”

That’s true. Especially since with a stall they’ll be able to speak directly to their customers. And most importantly, if they work at a restaurant they’ll only be able to cook what’s on their menu. There’s no doubt that by being employed they won’t be able to have their own way anymore.

At any rate, after worrying over it a lot, apparently they discussed it with the orphanage’s director.

When they did...

“She told us to try managing our own stall first. She also said that we should be able to make the stall ourselves with the help of the kids that are trying to become carpenters.”

Riiiight, since I think all the stalls for the Meat Dungeon Festival had to be rented from the Merchant’s guild.

Since it was decided that they'd be able to swing something with the little money they had on hand and the orphanage's help, they decided to start a stall by themselves. Plus, they now had the honor of placing fifth in the Meat Dungeon Festival, so they were really excited about it since they now had confidence that they'd do well.

"Am I right in thinking that you'll be serving offal?"

"Yeah. We plan to continue practicing what you taught us. It's delicious, and we can get the meat for cheap, so that's a plus too." Apparently they planned to enlist the help of the adventurers who came from the orphanage to get their supply even cheaper than usual.

"I think you already know this, but since you'll be using organs and intestines..."

"They go bad fast so you have to use them while they're still fresh, right?"

"Exactly. Be careful of that."

"Got it."

"Ah, right. I heard this from someone in the Merchant's guild. It sounded like your stall was doing well, Master."

"Yeah, he said, 'If he kept it up for all three days he'd have been a shoo-in for the top five.'" According to them, I managed to get to 13th place on one day alone.

That's amazing for only one day, especially on my first try.

"The more aware chefs are on the lookout for your cooking, Master. There are people already trying to copy you, too."

"Hmm~? That so? Already? Well, it's not like hot dogs are that hard to make," I said, and for some reason the two of them heaved a sigh.

"I know how weird it is to be saying this after you taught us so much, but normally this is the type of thing you never teach anyone else, and just trying to copy it would start a fight."

"A fight? Aren't you exaggerating a bit too much, Enzo? It's just a hot dog. Bread and sausages aren't anything new. I just put them together." After all, I

decided on hot dogs after taking into account what did and did not already exist in this world.

I even locally sourced the bread from the orphanage, although I did specify the shape to them. And as for the sausage, there were a lot of places in this town even now that sold them, so it wasn't exactly rare.

"That's just naive, Master. Sure they already exist, but you're the one who came up with the idea to 'combine' them, Master. So the dish is yours. And everyone knows you're the one who served the hot dogs first during the Meat Dungeon Festival, too. That's why you have the right to make a complaint about anyone who tries to copy it," Maynard explained.

That might be true, but I didn't even come up with hot dogs. They already existed for a long time in my world.

"I don't feel like complaining. Just leave them alone. Not to mention it's better that they're all working hard so that people can enjoy hot dogs," I said, causing the two of them to heave another sigh.

"How should I put this... It's just like Master to say that, but now I feel like an idiot for trying so hard to steal his techniques."

"Yeah." Apparently they originally just wanted to steal any recipe they could from me since I knew so much about cooking.

"I mean, if you ask I'll teach you."

"And you'd be the only one."

"Yeah. Normally chefs don't teach anyone."

"Well, I mean, I'm not a chef or anything."

"What are you saying?! You've got the skills of a cooking specialist!"

"Yeah! Actually, you're better!"

Like, even if you say that... It's all basically thanks to my Online Supermarket... Like, all the seasonings and stuff I can get from there are just amazing.

"I have no right to tell you this, but you need to stop giving recipes away so easily," Maynard advised.

I answered with, “I can’t promise anything, but I’ll try my best.”

But that made Enzo cry out, “I’m begging you! At the very least keep your offal dishes a secret! There are chefs already trying to copy it, just like with your hot dogs.”

“Huh? You mean the stew I taught you guys?”

“Yes. But it looks like they can’t get the cleaning right, so it’s all come out terrible so far.”

Well, of course. Without proper cleaning entrails are disgusting.

“So we’re going to try and compete using the offal dishes you taught us. That’s why you need to keep them a secret! Please! I’m begging you! You gotta!”

“Wai-, W-Wai-!! You two’re too close! Okay! I get it! I won’t teach anyone!” I declared, and the two of them finally seemed relieved.

But...

“What about the other kids at the orphanage?” I taught a lot of them how to clean my entrails.

“That’s covered. They all know reeeaaaally~ well what they need to do.” I wasn’t sure why, but the two of them grinned creepily.

Hey now, I don’t know what you guys did but that expression just looks evil.

“Anyway, I was pretty much going to leave anyway...”

“Huh?! Already?!”

“It shouldn’t be surprising, Maynard. I’m not from this town anyway.”

“That’s true, but...”

“I got a lot of meat from the meat dungeon, and had plenty of fun at the Meat Dungeon Festival. I’m pretty much done here.”

“But we wanted to learn more from you...”

“Don’t be like that, Enzo. You two did really well during the Meat Dungeon Festival. You’ll be fine.”

“But I wanted to ask you how to make that stew even better!”

“What? You should be the ones to do that. You need to figure out how to make it better on your own through trial and error. That’s how you guys made that ‘ultimate sauce’ as you call it, right? It’s the same idea,” I said, but they still looked uneasy.

“What’s with those faces? I’ll come back next year for the festival too, so just keep experimenting on your own until then. I’m looking forward to it!” My words caused the two of them to look at each other.

And then...

““Yes, Master!””

“Oh, right. Changing the subject, I want to order more bread from the orphanage. Can I get you two to tell them?” The bread rolls I got from them seemed like they’d have a lot of uses, so I decided to stock up before I left.

“Yes, of course. It’s thanks to you that we’ve started to get more orders too. We were in a dry spell before you came along. Our director is really happy about it.” According to them, people had learned that the buns for the hot dog I served were ordered from the orphanage, so they were getting a lot more orders now.

“Then I’ll head over tomorrow evening. I’d like to buy as much as I can of however much you have ready to eat by then. Can you tell the director that?” With my Item Box that stopped time, I wouldn’t have to worry about mold or anything, so I could buy as much as I wanted.

“Got it. You really are a huge spender though, Master.”

“I *am* an S-ranked adventurer, after all.” That was almost entirely due to Fel and the others, though.



Okay, so I’ll go to the orphanage tomorrow evening to buy the bread I asked for, and then we can leave for Karelina the day after tomorrow, I think?

After dinner, I was taking a breather with a cup of coffee while pondering plans.

As for Fel and the others...

《**Yes. This white one is delicious.**》

《I needed this! Pudding's the best~!》

《Sweet cakes... They're all so delicious!》 They were having dessert.

I actually bought some for myself too.

They were doing an autumn festival, so I started reminiscing about falls in Japan. When I laid eyes on a Mont Blanc, I couldn't help myself and got one.

I took a bite out of the creamy mountain and a sip of my drink. *Mmm, good. This chestnut purée is truly to die for.* The chestnut flavor was definitely there, and it wasn't too sweet, so it paired well with my coffee.

As I pondered leaving this town the day after tomorrow while enjoying my Mont Blanc...

"Huh? I feel like I'm forgetting something..." *What was it..... Ah! I remember! It's the gods! I'm forgetting the gods.*

It was coming up on a month since I last gave them an offering. They were probably getting impatient by now.

I guess I'll go and talk to them before I sleep. I'll get the shopping done before tomorrow evening, since I'm free until I need to go to the orphanage.



"Hello! Anybody there~?" I called out, and was greeted by the pitter-patter of several feet.

<Finally... Finally...! We've been waiting so loooong!!>

<We really have~.>

<Yo! Kept us waitin', didn't ya?>

<...You did.>

<Whiskey! Give us whiskey!>

<Gaahh! It's been so long!> For some reason, it sounded like some of them were at the end of their rope.

“Uhh, I think the plan should be for me to listen to your requests now, and I’ll get your offerings ready tomorrow during the day to hand over to you all tomorrow evening.”

<R-Realllyyyyyy?!>

<You’re such a fool, Ninrir~. Oh my.>

<Yeah. Actually, wait a second, isn’t your desperation your own fault since you just indulged yourself with what you got without planning or budgeting at all?>

<...You got what you deserved.>

<Well if you’re going to put it like that, those alcoholics over there are in the same boat.>

<Grk... I don’t have a comeback for that... but it’s so humiliating being considered the same as that idiot.>

<Don’t lump us in with Ninrir, who ate through that huge amount of stuff in just half a month. We managed to make ours last much longer. We only ran out three days ago.>

.....Holy crap Ninrir.

Even the hard-drinking liquor-loving combo was saying things like, ‘humiliating,’ and ‘don’t lump us in with her.’

<Sssshhhh... SHUT UP, ALL OF YOU! I mean! Like! It was so delicious! Nobody’d be able to resist thaaaaat!>

Oh no. She snapped. I always thought she was rather disappointing for a goddess, but is it just me or has her defectiveness level only stepped up? Like, seriously? You ate all that in only half a month? That’s actually scary. You sure you’re doing fine on weight, Ninrir?

<Heeheehee, I heard that. It’s true, Ninrir got fat after she met you, otherworlder boy. But she went back to normal during our house arrest, though I don’t know if that’s good fortune on her part or not. But you know what? She got fat again in a single month. And she’s much worse this time. Even her cheeks are sooo plump.>

<Yep yep. Ninrir'll never admit it, but Kisharle's right. She's fatter than ever.>

<.....Fatty.>

<Hm, now that you mention it, Ninrir does seem more plump than before.>

<Definitely.>

<WAAARRGGGGHHH! How dare all of you gang up on me like that! I-I'm not fat! S-Sure I might have gained just a liiiiittle weight, but I'm not fat! It's true! And you! Ruka! Don't call me a fatty you slanderer!>

<It's true. Look, your clothes have become so tight.>

<Grk...! Th-this is...! Y-Y-Y-You know! Uhh... R-Right! It's just a coincidence! A coincidence!>

...Ninrir ...coincidence? Really? There's a limit to how blatantly you should lie.

"Uhhmm... W-Well, you are a goddess, so I don't think you'll end up contracting diabetes or some other lifestyle-affecting disease, but please exercise some self-control."

<I-I know already!>

"Getting back to it, I wanted to hear all your requests."

<Yes! Me-me-me! I'm first!! I'm always first!!> Ninrir was on a whole other level of excitement.

I heard the other gods whispering to themselves, half in resignation, <Let's just have her hurry up and go so we can get it over with.>

<I don't like admitting this, but even with some extra paunch Ninrir is an earth-shattering beauty when she keeps her mouth shut. It's such a shame...>

<Heheheh... Don't say that so seriously, Kisharle. You're making me feel sorry for her.>

<But you think so too, right Agni?>

<Well, sure...>

<Ninrir is no good. Everyone in the divine realm knows.>

Hey now, Ninrir, your fellow goddesses are really heaping on some verbal abuse here.

It seemed like she hadn't heard them at all though.

<Of course, I need dorayaki. Dorayaki is great. I'll never get tired of it. Other than that, I also need cakes from Fumiya. Those are good too. They have so many different varieties, and each one is a delight. So I want a whole smorgasbord of cakes! Oh, right! If any new ones have come out... Wait, hey! Are you listening?! I'm talking about something important here!>

Important? You're just talking about what you want to eat. Hearing this, it's just becoming harder and harder to imagine Ninrir as an earth-shattering beauty.

"Yeah, yeah, I'm listening. Don't worry. You want dorayaki and cakes from Fumiya."

<Indeed. Especially any new ones!>

"I know already. I'll get you anything new. I can just decide on my own for anything left over right?"

<Indeed you can. Ah, but they need to be sweets, got it?! I'm counting on you!>

"Sure, sure. I know, I know."

This was the same as usual, but every time I think about Ninrir's offerings, it's just so much sweetness I feel like I'll get heartburn.

<Next is me, Kisharle. I'd like the usual face wash foam, lotion, and cream. Oh, and also some facial sheet packs. Also...> Kisharle asked for slightly more expensive face wash foam, lotion, cream, and facial sheet packs than usual. And anything left over she wanted to go into beauty products for the face.

I was told that she was still good on shampoo and hair treatment from the last refill, and the same was true for body soap.

Since that was the case, she wanted beauty products for her face.

Kisharle specifically asked for some sort of beauty lotion that would work well in moisturizing her face.

My gut instinct was that she shouldn't ask me about this kind of stuff, but I had no other choice but to try and fulfill her requests as accurately as possible by paging through my Online Supermarket.

After I listened to Kisharle's order, it was Agni's turn.

<Of course I'll be having beer! I'd like a box of the usual blue one and gold one. Other than that, I liked how I got such a wide variety last time. Could you get me something like that with the rest?>

A wide variety of beer... Ah! She's talking about the comparison set. If she likes that, then there's several more comparison sets, even for foreign beers. Maybe I'll get some of those.

<Oh, and some snacks that go well with beer would be nice. You know, like those grilled guts you made before. Those look like they'd be great with beer.>

True, grilled offal goes amazingly well with beer. Those hot dogs I made for the Meat Dungeon Festival would be great, too. I haven't made any sausages for the trip, so maybe I should take tomorrow to do that and set some aside for Agni. And let's make some other simple stuff to go with her beer too.

<Other than that, I'd of course like the rest to be spent on beer. I'll leave it to you to pick. I'm counting on you to get some good ones!>

She seemed to like that local beer comparison set immediately, so maybe I should choose a selection based off of new beers from famous brands? Well whatever, in times like these I should just rely on recommendations from the store.

<I'm next. I want ice cream.> It seemed like Miss Ruka was completely hooked on ice cream, since she centered her request on it this time as well.

As I listened further, I was told that she wanted to have a large variety of ice cream flavors.

Up until now I'd been mostly doing cups of ice cream from Fumiya, but I decided to pick from the general Online Supermarket this time instead.

She also wanted cake slices, especially new ones like Ninrir did.

<I also want food. The food you were cooking to prepare for your journey

looked good. I want it.>

O-Ohhh... They were watching me the whole time? Well, I made a lot for the trip so I think I can spare some for Ruka.

Last up was, of course, Hephaestos and Vahagn.

<It's finally our turn.>

<We've been discussing what we want next. We're mostly done.> It seemed like the two of them were having a lively convo about what to pick while sipping on some whiskey, and they'd mostly reached a consensus.

<First, we'd like the usual world's best whisky. Both of us like it, so one bottle for each of us.>

<Yeah. With the rest of the money, we want new whiskies we've never had before.>

<Yep. We want to try a bunch of different flavors. Also, try to give us as large a variety as possible.>

Which means they'd rather have a lot of modestly priced stuff rather than some expensive stuff. Time to rely on the store recs some more then.

"Okay, then. I'll send your offerings tomorrow night."

<Okay. Don't you dare forget what I asked for!>

"I know already. I have it written down, stop worrying." I did indeed write down all their orders on a memo pad I bought with my skill.

<Right then. We'll be looking forward to it~.>

<See ya tomorrow!>

<Tomorrow.>

<We can't wait!>

<We're counting on you!>

Tomorrow's shaping up to be pretty busy.



"Whew. This should do it." I had a ton of finished sausages in front of me.

Some were set aside for offerings to Agni and Ruka, but I made extra since I figured if I was going to be making them anyway, I should have some for us too. I had two kinds of sausages. The ones for hot dogs were simply seasoned with salt and pepper, while the other ones were a coarsely-ground black pepper and lemon herb flavor (heavy on the black pepper).

While I was at it, I made a lot of ground meat to refill my stock so that I would be ready to cook with ground meat at any time. Ground meat has a lot of uses, after all. There's meat soboro, vegetable stir fries, hamburg steak cutlets...

Ah, maybe I should make some meatballs next time.

I liked meatballs that were well fried in oil so they were firm and crisp on the outside but soft and juicy on the inside, but since that required oil, I never tried making them. They were too much trouble.

Yeah, let's try making some next time I'm free. I can even make extra and build up a stock.

Now that I'd thought of it, I suddenly got a real craving for them.

Okay. I'm definitely making them when I'm free next. Oh, whoops. I need to get back to Agni and Ruka's hot dogs.

This time I tried baking the sausages in the oven. I'd put them in earlier while I was preparing more sausages to store, so they were about done by now.

I put away the huge pile of raw sausages in my Item Box before peeking into the oven.

"Yeah, looks good." I retrieved the sausages from the oven, and...

My familiars were all standing behind me.

"....." Fel was trying to act aloof and unaffected, but he was drooling.

Dora-chan had his eyes glued onto the sausages even while flapping furiously to stay still in the air.

And Sui just kinda seemed like it was looking my way.

"These aren't for you. I'm offering them to the gods."

《What?!》

《It's not for us?!》

《We can't eat it?》

“Hey, come on, didn't you guys have a full breakfast?”

《**That is different. It has nothing to do with the sausages here and now.**》

《Exactly. I was just getting a little peckish.》

《Sui wants them...》 Fel and Dora-chan aside, Sui sounding so sad was getting to me.

“Anyway, these are for the gods, so no,” I said, before getting back to preparing the hot dogs for Agni and Ruka.

I put the baked sausages in some bread I bought with my skill and topped it with lots of ketchup and mustard. I kept the hot dogs I served for the Meat Dungeon Festival in mind and made sure to keep it simple, with only sausage between the bread.

I decided to give the goddesses a larger portion, so I cooked five for each of them.

“So, why are you three still here?”

《**It smells so good I cannot leave.**》

《Yeah! Feed us!》

《Masterrr, Sui wants to eaaat!》

Oh fine.

“You won't get a lot. It'll just be a snack.”

《**Okay.**》

《Tch! Fine...》

《Snack!》

Once again, I put some sausages into the oven to cook. There were ten each for my familiars. Of course, they managed to finish all ten like it was nothing. And even after that, they ate just as much as usual for lunch, as if nothing happened.

Just what is going on with this gluttonous trio's stomachs?



After lunch, I was busy buying all the items that the gods requested. The stuff that I picked out while scratching my head and looking at my notes were separated into different cardboard boxes for each of them. I made a pretty serious effort in choosing, so I was fairly confident that they'd be happy. It was actually pretty fun, going through sections of the Online Supermarket I never frequented and seeing new products I never knew existed.

Well, thanks to that I ended up buying some things for myself on impulse. While I was looking at makeup and beauty products for Kisharle, I found a section for men's cosmetics, and since the skin on my cheeks was getting pretty dry, I ended up buying some face cream of my own.

Also, while I was looking through my Tenant, Liquor Shop Tanaka, I found a new canned chuhai that was being advertised. Thanks to that, I remembered that I hadn't had any chuhai at all since I was summoned to this world, and that made me want some, so I bought that as well as a tasting set of ten cans of chuhai from S-company.

At any rate, I had fun shopping for the gods and myself, and by the time I'd finished, it was already about time to go to the orphanage for bread.

"Heeyyy, everyone! I'm going to go to the orphanage now to get the bread I ordered. What do you all want to do? Want to come with or stay home?" I already knew where the orphanage was, and it wasn't like this town was dangerous, so I figured I'd be fine even on my own.

《I am bored, so I will go with you. There might be some good food to discover at the stalls on the way.》

《You're right. I'm going too.》

《Sui wants to come too~!》

Gah, they want to go to more stalls?! They're just incorrigible.

In the end, we leapfrogged to three stalls that caught my familiars' eyes on the way to the orphanage. Well, at least they were all delicious. I ended up

buying a lot from each stall to either eat during the trip or gift to my servants back in Karelina, so I couldn't complain.

At any rate, after a couple detours, we finally reached the orphanage.

"Hello~!" I called out as I entered the grounds, and since I was a familiar face, I was quickly led to the director.

"We've been waiting for you, Mr. Mukohda." The director greeted me with a smile.

"Is the bread I asked for ready?"

"Yes, of course. Since it was you ordering, everyone worked happily through the night. The bread is here." I was shown to a worktable, on top of which nicely baked bread rolls were piled up.

"Ohh, there's quite a lot. That's great. Then I'll take all of them." There were more on the table than I ordered for the Meat Dungeon Festival.

I stored the bread rolls in my Item Box and took out a bag I prepared yesterday.

"Hup. Here's your money." I put the bag in front of the director with a thud.

It was filled with 200 gold coins.

The director was staring at the heavy-looking bag, confused.

"Uhhh, this is your payment for the bread, plus an extra donation." The director peeked inside, and her eyes widened.

"Mr. Mukohda, this is..."

"This orphanage is quite old, please use it to remodel."

"This is a very kind and generous offer, but this is still far too much money to accept. Even if we completely rebuilt this building, there would be a lot left over."

Huh? Really? I figured that 200 gold would help them a little, but I guess it was too much.

But still...

“If there’s any left over, just use it for the children.”

“But...”

“They helped me make some fun memories in this town, and they also helped me a lot in other ways too. Please, I want to give this to you. I am an S-ranked adventurer, so I’m not bothered by the amount. Please don’t hold back.”

“Mr. Mukohda... Thank you very much. We will use it well.”

“Okay, then, it’s about time for me to leave. ...Oh right. I heard that Maynard and Enzo are going to be starting their own stall. If they need more funds then please help them a little. Also, please tell them, ‘I’ll come back next year so train hard,’” I told the director.

She smiled at me. “I’ll be sure to pass on the message.”

When I was about to leave the orphanage with Fel and the others, the director and all the nuns sent me off with bowed heads and hands clasped in prayer.

I could feel their deep gratitude, and it made me feel like donating money was worth it.

Well, at least when I had the spare funds.

《**Okay. You are done, yes? We are going to tour stalls.**》

“What? When did we decide that?”

《**We are leaving tomorrow, correct? Then this will be the last hurrah.**》

《Oh, that sounds great!》

《Yaayyy! Meat~!》

《**Then we are in agreement. Let us be off!**》 Fel commanded, and the trio of gluttony ran off.

“Ahh, wait! You can’t buy food without money so you can’t just leave me behind!” I hurried to catch up to Fel and the others, who were already rushing towards where the stalls were.

As it would happen, my familiars had extra motivation since this would be the last time, and ended up eating at a pace that would drain all the stalls in the

town dry. As for me, I just considered myself lucky that I wouldn't have to cook dinner for them. Also, I took the opportunity to buy even more food from stalls as souvenirs, so I was quite happy.



"Sorry to keep you waiting, everyone," I called out and was greeted by a crowd of voices and footsteps.

<I almost couldn't stand waiting!! Hurry, hurry! My sweets! Give me my sweeeets!!!>

H-Hey Ninrir! W-Wait a second, you're too excited!

<Hey now Ninrir, calm down a little.>

<Yeah, geez.>

<...Fool.>

<I never want to become like that...>

<My feelings exactly.>

Wow, everyone thinks about her the same way... Geez, how sad can one goddess get?

"Uhhh, then I'll send them to you all in order. Please accept my offerings. First is Ninrir's." I set up Ninrir's cardboard box.

Inside were all the items she wished for: her favorite dorayaki and a variety of cakes.

As for any new flavors, their autumn fair and Halloween fair just happened to be in full swing so I made my choices from those menus.

When you think about fall flavors, the first thing that'd come to mind would be chestnuts, so I chose a Mont Blanc that used three different types of chestnut cream, and a chestnut roll cake with lots of chestnuts in it. I also got her an apple pie that used domestic apples, an apple cake with a whole apple in it, and a pear tart.

The box, through which I could subtly smell what was inside, disappeared as soon as I lined it up on the altar.

“Woah...!”

<Waaaaahhhh! I’ve been waiting so long for sweets from the other wooorrrrllld! Snff Finally... Finally! I can eat sooommmeee! Thank youuuuu!>

.....She’s totally crying. If you’re gonna cry that hard why not just plan out how you’re going to eat things instead of gorging on them all at once?

<Hey now, Ninrir. Don’t eat here. That’s unseemly.>

<Shut up! I’ve been waiting so long for these! I’m eating them now!>

<Woah! She’s gobbling them up! She’s got food in both hands!!>

<Your mouth is plastered with cream. Filthy.>

<Woah there, you’re her fellow goddesses, right? Do something about her.>

<Yeah. She’s just unsettling to look at.>

<What? I’ve got nothing to do with that.>

I understood why the three goddesses were like that, but the fact that the liquor lover combo was being so cruel was a bad sign.

<Aghh, geez. Let’s just leave Ninrir alone and go to the next one. Hear that, otherworlder boy?>

“Y-You sure?”

<It’ll be fine. She’s already gorging herself on the cakes and stuff she got from you. She’ll probably have her fill eventually.>

She’s supposed to be a goddess, but they said she was... gorging herself...

<Waaahhhh! It’s been so long since I’ve had dorayaki and cakes, they’re so goooooood!>

...Yeah, I guess I should just let sleeping ‘gods’ lie on this one.

“Uhh, then let’s move on. Next is Lady Kisharle.”

I set up Kisharle’s cardboard box. Of course, the inside was packed with beauty products. I’d bought the entire set of her slightly expensive skincare products, as per her request.

Other than that, she asked for beauty products for the face, so I selected

some items marked as premium for her. Though the price for them was also premium. One was a beauty lotion that was advertised as being able to help a person regain their skin's original bounce and smoothness. Its price was high, a surprising 1 gold and 4 silver. Regardless of that high price, the effects made it a very popular product.

One other was a beauty oil that was on the recommended page. It was apparently made by blending five carefully selected natural plant oils together for a light and nice feel on the skin, and was advertised to bring back gloss and moisture when applied. Also, it said that the oil could be used not just for the face, but also the hair and the rest of a person's body. I'd heard beauty oils were popular among women nowadays, and this one was the most highly recommended of them. The oil also cost me 1 gold and 4 silver. As always, good beauty products cost an arm and a leg.

At any rate, I was fairly confident Kisharle would be satisfied with my selection. After the cardboard box disappeared, I started telling Kisharle about my purchases and how to use them, and she seemed quite interested.

<So, this is an effective beauty lotion and the most recommended beauty oil right now? Thank you, otherworlder boy. Heehee, I'm looking forward to using them both. By the way, for this oil, how do I use it?>

"Wait a second please."

There should have been instructions on the page...

I checked the product page, and they were there.

"Uhhh, it looks like there's more than one use? First, it seems that if you use it right after you wash your face, it'll soften your skin and help facial lotion seep in better. Also, you can use it in place of cream after you apply facial and beauty lotion. Apparently if you mix it with facial lotion or cream they will boost its moisturizing ability. Other than that, it seems you can use it instead of massage oil when you get a massage. It says here to adjust the amount and style of usage according to the state of your skin."

<Hmmm~, so it has a lot of uses. I'll have to try it today then. I'm looking forward to it~.>

<You should be done now, right Kisharle? Switch with me.>

<Aww, Agni, don't be in such a rush.> Then Agni, tired of waiting, made her presence known.

<I'm next. Hurry and give it.>

"Sure, sure. Here you go." I set up Agni's cardboard box.

Of course, it was filled with beer.

As she wished, I had a box of S-company's premium beer in the blue cans, Y-bisu beer in the golden cans, and two local beer comparison sets.

Other than that, I got her a foreign beer comparison set, some black beer, and some new beers. Anyway, there were a lot of different beers packed inside, which should've satisfied Agni the beer fanatic.

Also, since she asked for snacks that would go well with beer, I packed in the grilled offal she asked for, as well as hot dogs and a portion of the other fried travel rations I'd made.

<Ohhh! This looks great! Thanks, man! I'm gonna have some as soon as I get home!> I kind of felt like I should've kept quiet about it, but Agni felt kind of like a middle-aged man.

I'd never met her in person, but I could just imagine her snacking on fried foods or grilled offal while downing beer after beer, just like a standard old dad or something.

<I'm next.>

Oh, it's Miss Ruka. Uhhh, her box is... this one.

As soon as I'd set up her cardboard box, it disappeared. Inside, there was ice cream and cake. There were the usual cups from Fumiya, as well as several things I picked out from the general Online Supermarket. I got her everything from a pretty expensive American ice cream brand to a few more affordable kinds.

As for the cakes, I picked out the same stuff that I gave to Ninrir. She also wanted food, so I shared some of my travel rations with her too, including the hot dogs I made during the afternoon.

<Lots of ice cream. Lots of cake. Lots of food. I'm happy. Thank you.> It felt to me like Ruka's voice carried just a subtle hint of elation in it, so it seemed like she was quite happy with the offering.

That's great to know.

<Great, then last is us!>

<Bring it!>

Whadda ya mean, 'bring it'? Geez.

I set up the cardboard box for the Hephaestos and Vahagn. It was stuffed with whiskey bottles, so it was rather heavy. Other than the usual world's best whisky from a domestic brand, I'd picked up as many different varieties of whiskey as I could at their request. I put in domestic whiskys, Scotch whiskies, Irish whiskeys, American whiskeys, and Canadian whiskies. Basically, everything I could get my hands on at an affordable price.

"Hup. This is the last box. It's heavy, so be careful."

<Alright.> As soon as I heard Hephaestos' reply, the heavy cardboard box disappeared.

<Yahooo! This is exactly what we asked for! Thanks!>

<We definitely asked for as many varieties as possible. With all these choices, it'll definitely be fun trying them. I'm grateful!>

<Alright! Let's start drinking now, War god!>

<Of course, Blacksmithing god!> I heard the thumping of footsteps.

.....Uhhh, did they run off already?

"Ummm..."

<What should I have next~? Okay! I'll have this cake!>

<...Everyone's gone home. It's only Ninrir here eating cake. I'm going home to eat my ice cream too. Later.>

"Ahh, sure thing, Miss Ruka."

...That was fast! Geez, are they children? Going off as soon as they get what

they want like that. Well, I guess it's better than the one who started scarfing down her treats right on the spot.

“Well, I guess that’s all the offerings done with. I should sleep now since we’re going to be leaving town early tomorrow.”





Before leaving Rosenthal, I stopped by the Merchant's guild and returned the key to the house I'd rented and settled my accounts as well.

After that, we stopped by the Adventurer's guild to say my goodbyes to Giannino the guildmaster. He showered me in thanks the whole time, though. While it was a request, I brought back way more dungeon pork and dungeon beef that he asked for, after all. I managed to get even more meat than that for me and my familiars, so I was more than happy to do it.

Finally, we headed for the town gates, and there, waiting for us, was...

"Big bro, you're late!" Luis and his party, who I met on the first floor of the meat dungeon, were waiting for us along with all the other orphans that came over to help me make food. Maynard and Enzo, two of the orphans who wanted to become cooks in the future and called me master because of it, were there too.

"Oh, you guys came?"

"Well yeah, you were really good to us after all, bro."

"It's a disciple's duty to see their master off."

"Exactly." This brought up some feelings in me that made me itch, but it was nice.

"You're comin' back, right bro?"

"Yeah, of course. I'll come back next year for the Meat Dungeon Festival."

"Great! You made us some good weapons, bro, so we'll get much much stronger by the time you come back next year!"

"Yeah. We'll beat more monsters and get more meat!"

"Yeah!" Luis and the other adventurer hopefuls were full of spirit.

"It's cool that you're so motivated, but be careful not to get hurt."

"Of course! We've got some ideas for that too."

"Yep. We've been practicing our teamwork. Right, everyone?"

“““““Yeah!”””””

“I see. Well, do your best. Oh, also, next time I come I’ll cook some food for you with the drops you pick up.” When I said that, everyone cheered.

“Master, we’ll guard the recipes you entrusted to us with our lives.”

“We heard from the director. Thanks to you, our stall is almost done.”

“Oh! That’s great to hear.”

So they’re close to having their own stall for real. That’s awesome.

“It’s all thanks to you, Master.”

“Thank you so very much.”

“Well, the rest will be up to your efforts. Work hard.”

“““Yes, sir!”””

“We’ll make the recipes you taught us even better for the next time!”

“Yeah. Then we’ll have you eat it and groan in jealousy!”

“Hahaha, that’s the spirit. I’m looking forward to that!” The children were all watching me.

“Well then, see you all later!”

“You definitely gotta come next year, bro!”

“We’re waiting for you, Master!”

“For sure!”

“Yeah, I’m definitely coming back!” It was hard, but we set off for Karelina.

“Then, let’s go. Fel, Dora-chan.”

《**Indeed.**》

《Yeah.》 Alongside Fel and Dora-chan, I stepped through the gates.

Sui, as always, was in my bag.

Luis, Maynard, Enzo, and the rest of the orphans were waving goodbye as I left. I turned around and waved back at them.

“Rosenthal’s a good town.”

《**Quite. It is a nice place overflowing with good food.**》

《It was fun.》

But in the end, I feel most relaxed in Karelina.

“Let’s go back to Karelina.”

《**Hmm. Let us hurry. Then we can head to the next dungeon.**》

Grk! ...Fel remembered.

《Oh, that’s a great idea! We were talking about a dungeon in the next country over, right? Sounds fun.》

Oh no. Dora-chan remembers too.

《Dungeon~?》

Agghh even Sui woke up after hearing the word, ‘dungeon.’

“No, we’re going back to Karelina first. Right?”

《**You are simply planning to stall again, are you not?**》

Grk!

《Hmmm? Reeally?》

“N-No! No way...” *They know! Oh no, how am I supposed to stall now?*

《**To be honest, I want to go straight to the next country, but you would find that disagreeable, no?**》

“W-Well of course. I already told the people waiting at home that I’d be gone three months at most.”

《**That is why we are going back. But you understand what happens after that, right?**》

Awwwwww dammit... I can’t refuse, can I?

“...Fine. We’ll go to a dungeon in the country of Erman.”

《**Hmph. As long as you understand.**》

《Yahoooo! Finally, a hard dungeon! Aww man I’m shaking in anticipation!》

《We're going to a dungeon? Yayyy!》

《**With that decided, let us hurry home. Get on.**》

Agghhh, fine. I get it.

As soon as I got on Fel, he started running.

“Waaarrgghh!! Too fast!! Go slowerrrr!”

《**How many times have you ridden on my back? You should be used to it by now!**》

“I am! A little, at least! But this is just way too fast!! This isn't the kind of thing you can just 'get used to' because someone else told you toooo!”

《**Hmph! Just shut up and hang on. I am going to speed up!**》

“No, no! Speed up?! Stop that!! Wait a second! I'm gonna die! W-W-W-Wai-AAAAGGHHHH...!”

Gossip: The Children Half a Year Later

“Welcome baaaack!”

After a full day's work, when Maynard and Enzo pulled their cart back to the orphanage they were overrun by a herd of small children.

“We're back.”

“We're back, everyone.”

The little ones grabbed on to the two of them and started making a fuss, saying things like, “Meeaat,” “Meat! Meat!” or “Meat pleeeaaassee.” These growing children were basically always hungry.

“Geez, oh alright...” The two of them grumbled while still preparing their cart for the children.

To Maynard and Enzo, who were raised in the orphanage, all the children here were family. It was fair to say that all the younger kids were basically their little brothers and sisters.

And to them, feeding hungry children was their way of paying back the orphanage and its director, even if just a little.

Since the orphanage was filled with children with vigorous appetites, the biggest expense the orphanage had was for food. Maynard and Enzo knew that the director and the other nuns were all worried about food costs.

“Okay, okay, we still have some guts left. We'll make skewers, alright? Just calm down, everyone.” At the moment, their tripe-style chitterling tomato stew was their stall's specialty, so it sold out every day. That meant they could only make skewers for the children.

Glistening drops of fat dripped off of the sizzling chitterling skewers.

Not to mention the amazing smell of cooking meat.

The children, captivated by the smell, crowded Maynard and Enzo's cart.

They were all drooling and locked on to the skewers, looking like they just couldn't wait.

"Oh, looks like we made it in time today." From behind the gathered children, Maynard and Enzo heard Luis from the adventurer group. Luis was the same age as they were.

"Oh, it's just you Luis. You're back from the dungeon already?"

"Yeah. Our teamwork's improving so we're doing better hunting, too."

"Yep yep, we did great today."

"Right. We got six monsters!"

"And one of them was a wild chicken, too. We got lucky." They must have had a really good day, since Luis's party and the other adventurer hopefuls all sounded excited as they bragged.

"I see. You're getting good too."

"Hah! Of course!" Luis replied to Enzo.

"We promised our bro, after all. It'd just be too shameful if we didn't grow at all." Hearing what Luis said, his party members all nodded in agreement.

"Haha! Yeah, you're right. Whoops, these are done."

As soon as the children heard Enzo say that, they swarmed him saying, "Gimme! Gimme!" and "Meeaat!"

"Line up! Line up, I said! If you don't, you don't get any! And as always, you all only get one each!" Maynard shouted, and the children all quickly and smoothly formed a line.

So Maynard and Enzo handed each of them a skewer.

The children, with skewers in hand, happily started chowing down.

The two could hear shouts of, "Delicious!" from here and there.

"Today we want some too."

"Sure. Here you go." Luis and the others, who lined up in the back, also got a skewer each.

“Mm? Is it just me, or is this better than last time...?” Luis wondered to one of his teammates who nodded along after they had a bite of their skewers.

“Really?”

“It’s great as always, but...”

“Heheheheh... So you can tell...”

“Yeah.” The two cooks grinned.

“What? Why’re you acting like that?”

“You guys aren’t the only ones working hard, that’s all. Right, Enzo?”

“Exactly,” Maynard and Enzo said, looking at one of the skewers they cooked.

“Hm? Did you change something with the skewers?”

“Yep. We’ve been researching this flavor day after day.”

“What he said. We made a small change to the sauce a couple days ago.”

“Really?”

“Just a little, though. All we did was add a little bit of an herb that wasn’t there before.”

“It’s only a small difference, but I think you can taste a bit of refreshing acidity.”

“In my opinion, adding this herb makes it so that offal, which is really fatty, is a bit lighter and less overwhelming for the palate.” The two of them said, causing Luis to stare hard at his skewer before taking a small test bite. Once he did that though, he started wolfing it down again.

“Mgmg..... Hmmm, since you told me about it, I think I can taste the acidity a little when I bite into it.” Luis and the others once again started eating, muttering things like, “Now that you mention it,” and, “Yeah...”

“You two must’ve put in a lot of effort.” It was only a small difference, but Luis could really feel their mettle through their efforts to try and make the taste even a little better.

“I’ll repeat what you said: Of course. We’ve been given a really good chance.

If we didn't put the effort in, we'd be letting our Master down."

"Exactly. It's not just the skewers, either. Every day we've been researching how to make our main draw, the tomato stew, even better."

"Of course, we've been sticking to the base recipe that Master gave us, though."

"Man, there's only half a year until big bro comes back, huh?"

"Yeah. We made a big boast, saying that we'd make him groan in jealousy after eating our food, after all. So of course we'd want to grow as much as we possibly could to show him. We can't afford to get lazy about it."

"Right."

"If you're gonna put it like that, then we bragged to big bro that we'd be so much stronger the next time we met. But you know... I'm still looking forward to it!"

"Yeah!"

"Well, we'll just have to do our best, won't we?"

Chapter 7: Bandit King's Treasure

We made camp for the first time after leaving Rosenthal.

We had dinner early today, so I decided to use my time to send the customary offering to Demiurge.

As always, I offered him several bottles of sake and a premium kantsuma set.

<Thanks for doing this so often~.>

"No, no, the pleasure's mine."

Well, this is something like insurance to me.

<Providing enough for both those gods and me must be a lot of work. Sorry about all this, really.>

"It's fine. I only make offerings to Ninrir and the others once a month now so I have much more leeway there, and since your preferences are so defined, it doesn't take much time to choose for you." Demiurge basically let me pick what I thought was good, so I could just rely on the store rankings and not spend too much time on things.

<I'm glad to hear you say so, but I feel I haven't rewarded you enough.Right! Didn't you all just leave Rosenthal?>

"Yes, that's right...?"

<I see... Then I have something that might be perfect. It's a rule among us gods to not interfere too much with matters down there, but this should be okay.>

Hm? What's that mean?

<There's a mountain nearby, right?>

Mountain? Oh, yeah I can see one to the left of the road.

<Go there.>

"Huh? Is there something in the mountain?"

<Well, you'll just have to find out, won'tya? I bet your Fenrir'll notice first.
Alright then. Bye now.>

"Ah!! Lord Demiurge!!" I tried to call him many times after that, to no avail.

"Go to the mountain? What's even there?"



"That's what he said." I brought up what Demiurge told me during breakfast.

By the way, Fel and the others were scarfing down a hearty ginger-fried pork rice bowl first thing in the morning.

There was no way I could emulate that, so I settled for rice balls, one with finely chopped bonito flakes and one with mustard greens. I also bought instant miso soup with my skill.

《**So a god has instructed us to go to that mountain? Interesting... More.**》

With Fel's fifth demand for more, I presented him with an extra-large helping of ginger-fried pork over rice.

"Here. I have no idea what's over there, but since a god said to go, we have to go, right?"

《But you know, the mountains are where *those things* live. Gimme more too.》

Dora-chan's eating a lot this morning.

I put Dora-chan's third serving in front of him.

"You know about those mountains?"

《Well, yeah. It was a long time ago, but I visited them by accident. Man, that was awful.》 Dora-chan talked while shoving mouthfuls of rice bowl down his gullet.

《Masterrr, Sui wants more tooooo!》

Next is Sui, huh?

I served Sui its fifth helping, just like Fel.

"Awful?"

《Yeah. I'd never lose against those things one-on-one, but they're so numerous. And persistent too. So persistent. I was chased around for so long last time. That made me mad, though, so I used Ice magic at full power to blow them away.》

Umm, is it just me or is he saying a lot of ominous things? Like that 'they're really numerous' and 'so persistent.' What could Dora-chan even be referring to? And he said things like 'full power' and 'Ice magic.' Wouldn't it be really dangerous if Dora-chan used magic at full power?

《So when over half of them became skewers on my ice, they finally learned the meaning of fear and stopped chasing me!》

.....Dora-chan...

《**Oh? So you have had a confrontation with them too, Dora?**》

《You have too, Fel?》

《**Indeed. Dora is correct, they are numerous and devious. They are not especially strong, but with their numbers they were quite a pain to deal with.**》

《Yep yep. There're so many of 'em and they're so persistent and cunning! They tried to use their numbers to throw stones from every direction.》

Whaaat? Whatever they are, they could throw rocks?

《**But I am not alone this time. Dora and Sui are here. I want to visit a hard dungeon, but we cannot very well ignore a divine order. Heheheh, it will be fun to pay them back on the way to the mountain.**》

《Oh! I'm all for that! They caused me a lot of trouble too. Let's fuck 'em up!》

Fel, you're lookin' kinda evil there. And you, Dora-chan, you already skewered more than half of them with ice. Doesn't that make you even? In the first place...

“What the hell have you two been talking about this entire time?”

《**Black baboons.**》

《Yep. A monster called a black baboon.》

Black baboon? Baboon... So, like a monkey monster?

《Monster? Are we fighting?》

《**Indeed. We are. Of course, victory is assured.**》

《Hahhaahh! Of course!》

《Yayyy! Sui will beat loots and lots!》 All three of them looked positively ready to murder.

But uhh...why am I getting a bad feeling about this?

“It’s not like we have the option not to go... I mean, Demiurge told me to do this myself...”

Hmmm...

《**Okay. We have finished breakfast, so let us go now.**》

《Yeah! Let’s go!》

《Loots and looots!》

“Wai-! W-W-Wait a second! Why are you trying to run off so suddenly?! We haven’t even cleaned up.”

《**Mrrr... Hurry it up.**》

“I will, but it won’t be as fast as you want.”

《**What? This is a divine order, you realize? We must act upon it immediately.**》

《Exactly. Let’s hurry up and go! I’m gonna teach ’em what for!》

《Masterrr, let’s hurry to the mountain!》

No good. They’re totally in battle mode. I won’t be able to stop them. Agghhh, fine. I guess let’s just go.



We’d arrived at the foot of the mountain that Demiurge said we should go to, where a large forest dominated the landscape. According to Fel, it was called Mt. Berit.

《**This is the black baboon’s territory. We will proceed carefully.**》

《You got it!》

《Sui will beat 'em up!》

“W-Will I be fine.....? I have nothing but worries...”

《My word, why are you so cowardly all the time? You have the Perfect Defense skill, there should be no reason to be that worried.》

“You might say that, but everything you guys said is so worrying. Like how there’s so many of them, or that they throw stones and chase you around... I might have the Perfect Defense skill, but that doesn’t mean getting mobbed isn’t scary as hell.”

《Well, it won’t come to that. That’s why we’re here. Right, Fel?》

《Indeed. We will sweep them off the face of this world.》

《Sui will protect you, Master, so don’t worry!》

They’re so confident... Well, I know just how strong they are, but for some reason I’ve got a real bad feeling...



“Woah! Waaaagghh!” We were currently in the middle of being doggedly chased.

Those black baboons were no joke.

The second we stepped foot into the forest that was their territory, they appeared.

They were baboon monsters with black fur that stood almost two meters tall.

From the ground or from among the thick tree branches, before we knew it, they came from everywhere in this untouched forest and tightly surrounded us.

On top of that, as they appeared, they were already screaming and baring their teeth in an attempt to be intimidating. I was seriously on the verge of wetting myself.

But my familiars were all calm, like they’d already sensed them before they showed themselves.

Fel even said, «**So you finally show yourselves,**» before immediately and with no prior warning swinging his front paw to unleash a Rending Claws attack.

That single strike sliced a lot of black baboons to ribbons, along with entire trees.

It managed to create a hole in their net, allowing us to escape.

That led to where we were now, and of course I was riding on Fel's back like usual...

“Waagh! Waaaaaaaggghhh!!” I was desperately clinging to Fel, who was running at ferocious speeds while weaving between trees. I couldn't help but scream.

The baboons, who had lost some of their comrades, screamed as they chased us. Not only that, but Fel and Dora-chan were right. They were throwing an awful lot of rocks at us. Thanks to Fel's barrier, none of them hit, but the sounds of the rocks continuously thudding off of it was terrifying.

«F-Fel! How long do we have to run for?!» I sent through telepathy while desperately clutching at Fel's nape.

«**It depends on how many pursuers Dora and Sui manage to stop. Once we lower their numbers a bit, we can counterattack.**» Dora-chan was using his flight ability to rain Ice magic upon the black baboons from above the trees and lessen their numbers.

And Sui was on my back and shoulders as I clung to Fel, skillfully rapid-firing Acid Bullets like a machine gun.

«Hah?! What depends?! They're already more than half gone! But it's not over yet! I'm gonna teach them just who they're messing with, I'll teach them until they're sick!»

«Sui's gonna get more and more tooo!»

«**Hehaha! That is the spirit, you two! There is a clearing ahead. We will take care of the rest of them there all at once!**»

«Yeah!!»

«Okay!»

《Nonono! We don't actually have to deal with all of them! Why can't we just lose them or something?!》

Agghh! Why is this trio so belligerent! Ah, is this because of the War God Vahagn's blessing?! I could vaguely remember Vahagn saying something like that.

Wait, but Sui shouldn't have Vahagn's blessing...?

《**Okay, we are speeding up!**》

《What?! W-Wait a second!!》 Fel suddenly sped up.

“Waaaaaaaaaagghh!” The wind pressure was so strong I couldn't open my eyes, but even so, I could feel the black baboons behind us keeping up.

“Woa! Woaa!” “Gyaah! Gyah!” “Woo! Woووو!” Countless noisy cries entered my ears.

《H-Hey, Fel, you said you were going to get all of them in the clearing ahead, but is there really a clearing in a forest this thick?!》

《**There is.**》

《R-Really?》

《**You are such a worrier. Just shut up and see.**》

You say that, but...

Fel put on even more speed.

“W-Woooooaaaaaaggghhhh!” I shut my eyes and clung to Fel for a few minutes.

《**Okay. We are here.**》 Fel said after skidding to a stop. We were now in a huge unnatural clearing, with not a single standing tree in the middle of an incredibly thick forest.

The clearing was as big as two soccer fields.

We were pretty much right in the middle, and the black baboons had started flooding in.

“Woo! Woووو!” “Gyaaah! Gyah!” “Woo! Woa! Woووو!” The threatening voices

of the black baboons reverberated through the clearing, causing all the birds nesting in the surrounding trees to take off.

《**Oh? Their numbers have been lessened quite a bit.**》

《Well, yeah.》 Dora-chan, who rejoined us at some point, answered.

《Sui worked hard!》 Sui had also gotten off my back at one point and was bouncing up and down on the ground.

《**Okay. I will take care of the finale.**》 Fel said, and at the same time, a tornado appeared in the center of the horde of black baboons.

Then...

“Woah.....” With nothing to hold onto, the black baboons got sucked up by the tornado.

Of course, the tornado, most likely Fel’s Wind magic, wasn’t just a regular tornado. There were blades of wind hidden everywhere inside it.

The tornado was thus something like a giant blender, mercilessly turning the black baboons into mincemeat.

“That’s a pretty nasty piece of magic, Fel.”

《**Hmph. These things are just too numerous. This will simply bring them back into balance.**》

《Wahhh~! The red is spinning round and round! Masterrr, look look!》

“Urp... I’m looking, Sui. ...It’s a tornado that’s stained red with blood.....” In front of us, a red tornado was spinning, spraying blood everywhere.

《**It should be just about over.**》 Fel said as the tornado dissipated.

At the same time, pulped black baboon meat chunks dropped to the ground with wet thuds.

“.....”

《**Okay, let us proceed.**》

《Yeah.》

《It’s already over?》

“Nonono, wait a second.”

《What is it? Black baboon meat is terrible, there is no point in retrieving it. They have no magic stones either, and their pelts are not that useful either so there should be no point in picking them up.》

“No, that’s not what I meant. Well, it kind of is. But more importantly, like, look at this grisly scene you made. I mean, isn’t there something, like... more you should be feeling?”

《I have no idea what you are babbling on about. In the first place, their fates were sealed as soon as they decided to attack us, the strong. That is all it is. Also, why is this different? The things we did in dungeons before are pretty much the same.》

“When you put it that way, you may be right, but...” Unlike in dungeons, where the bodies disappeared and just left drops, this just seemed more real.

《That’s how it is. Their corpses will either feed other monsters or return to the ground.》 Fel and Dora-chan both felt nothing seeing what they wrought.

I guess in the end, it’s the law of the jungle... Not that I wasn’t already aware, though. I’m so glad that all three of them are on my side. Still, that blood-red tornado... I feel like I’ll be seeing that in my dreams...

“By the way, it’s amazing that you knew this clearing existed in this huge thick forest.”

《Mm? Well... When I was here before...》

“Huh? Before...?” I looked around the clearing. “Whaaaaaat...?”

What the hell did you do, Fel?



We managed to pass through the forest that served as the black baboon’s territory, and now stood before a towering mountain.

《Hm?》 Fel made a noise and stared at a point near the peak of the mountain.

“What?”

《There seems to be a steep cliff just before the peak.》

“Yeah, looks like it.”

《**There is magic placed on that area, something like an illusion.**》

“Illusion? Which means there’s something there?”

《**Most likely.**》

《If that’s the case, why don’t I just pop up there and check?》 Dora-chan suggested after hearing the conversation between Fel and me.

True, Dora-chan can fly so he can just go up and check...

“If there’s an illusion placed on it, that means someone did that on purpose, right? Won’t it be dangerous?”

《**It should not be a problem for Dora.**》

《Yeah. I’m not that weak.》

“I know Dora-chan isn’t weak, but he’ll be going alone, won’t he? We’ve all been acting together this whole time, too. Anything could happen up there. Of course I’m worried.”

《I’m telling you I’ll be fine. Even if something happens, it’s not like I’ll die right away.》

《**Exactly. Dora is strong enough for me to respect him as such. He will not fall to just anything.**》

“If both of you are that certain, then I guess it’s fine, but...”

《I’ll be back right away, just wait here. Right then, time to do some work.》

“Ah! Dora-chan, wait!” Dora-chan paid me no heed and zipped off towards the mountain peak.

“He didn’t have to rush off right away... Will he be okay...?”

《**You need not worry. Dora is strong.**》

I know that. I’m just worried because he’ll be all alone in a place where anything can happen.



“Hey, is he really gonna be okay?” It had already been two hours since Dora-

chan flew up to check things out. At this point, it was only natural that I started to worry. I couldn't sit still.

《**Stop fidgeting, calm down. How many times have I told you that you need not worry about Dora?**》 I was pacing around restlessly, and Fel was looking at me with exasperation.

“You say that, but look how long it's been since Dora-chan left! Something happened, didn't it?”

《**Wait, look there. He has returned.**》 Fel pointed towards the air with his snout, and I could see something coming for us at high speed. It wooshed through the air and came to a sudden stop in front of me.

《Sorry I took so long.》

“Dora-chan! I was so worried since you weren't coming back!”

《I already said sorry.》

《**Hmph. And that is why I have been telling you not to worry.**》

“You know, anyone would start worrying after such a long time.”

《What happened?》

Ah, Sui woke up. Even though it'd been sleeping so soundly after the fight with the black baboons...

《Sui is awake. Perfect. I found something neat up there.》

《Neat?》

《Yeah. What I found was...》 According to Dora-chan, the cliff before the peak that Fel pointed out was in fact shrouded in an illusion and only looked like a regular cliff at first glance. But since Fel had identified the trickery in play, Dora-chan continued to carefully explore it, and eventually found a cave-like hole around the middle of the cliff.

《Since I wasn't sure that was the main thing being hidden by the illusion, I decided to search inside first. Then...》 Dora-chan found some human corpses skewered by spears. There were three bodies, and whatever happened apparently happened long ago since they were desiccated skeletons at this

point. They wore leather armor and had swords, much like a common adventurer seen in any Adventurer's guild.

Other than that, Dora-chan also found what seemed to be monster bones that had been crushed into powder.

Given the three factors of 'cave,' 'adventurer,' and, 'monster,' the first thing I thought of was a dungeon.

It seemed Dora-chan thought the same thing, but as he proceeded further, not a single monster appeared.

Thinking it was weird, Dora-chan stopped hovering and touched down. The instant he did...

《There was a huge roar and everything over my head was covered in fire.》

"The second you landed?"

《**Sounds like a trap. You were saved by being so small, Dora.**》

《Tch! Shut up!》

"Still, does the fact that there's traps mean that it really is a dungeon?" From what Dora-chan said, there wouldn't be any monsters, but since there were traps, I still felt that it being a dungeon was the biggest possibility.

《Are we going to a dungeon?》

《No, Sui, it's not a dungeon. I went quite a ways inside, so I'm sure of that. It felt like that trap was something man-made, rather than a dungeon trap.》

"Man-made?"

《Yeah. Like, the fire I talked about smelled of oil. A dungeon wouldn't bother with oil.》

Now that he mentions it, that's true.

Thanks to Fel and the others being there, I was never hurt by traps anyway so I'd forgotten that dungeons had similar traps.

But when I thought back I never once smelled oil.

《**Dungeon traps are fundamentally built within the dungeon. So if**

something uses fire, they would not bother with oil, and would use a fire magic stone instead.》 Fel was right, dungeons had monsters in them so even without oil, it would be easier to use a fire magic stone anyway.

“Which means the trap is man-made, like Dora-chan said. But why? Is there something in the cave they want to go that far to protect?”

《Like a treasure or something?》

“No, no, it’s not necessarily a treasure, right? If they’re going to hide it in a place like that, then it might be some sort of dark thing with a history that can’t be brought out into the world.”

《No, that does not seem likely. We received a divine order to come here. If this thing should remain hidden, then we would not have been told about it.》

“Ah! You’re right. We were told to come to this mountain. Then what could it be?”

《I believe Dora’s theory of a treasure would be the most plausible, but..... Ahah!》 Fel raised his voice like he’d thought of something.

“Do you know something, Fel?”

《I remember now.》

“What?”

《Hm... Around 300 years ago, there was a bandit who styled himself the bandit king.》

“Bandit king?” According to Fel, the human who called himself the bandit king and his crew made this place their stronghold even while going all over the continent and stealing things along the way. They’d attack any carriage that seemed like it had money, from merchant caravans to nobles. And as soon as they succeeded in hitting their target and getting what they wanted, they’d leave.

Thanks to that, it was quite hard to figure out where they were at any given time. Back then, entire countries and their Adventurer’s guilds apparently had their hands full with this bandit king.

Fel only knew that the bandit king made his base here because he was Fel. No

one else had any way of figuring that out.

“You could have just told them this was their base.”

《I had no responsibility to do so. Why would I?》

“Well, true...”

《At any rate, this forest was black baboon territory even then, and they still managed to come and go freely. They probably obtained some sort of magic item to allow it.》 If this place was already black baboon territory back then, of course they’d never be found.

No one would expect them to settle down in such a dangerous area.

《That bandit king was the very picture of greed. Apparently, even when he was on the verge of dying from old age, he was still clinging to his treasures, saying he would give them to no one before disappearing.》

Wow. Sounds like a monster. It’s not like you can bring your treasures to the afterlife.

《After that, decades passed before the bandit king’s descendants leaked the rumor that his base was somewhere in this area. From there, people started to speculate that the bandit king’s treasure was somewhere here too. Many adventurers came looking for that treasure, it seems. Almost all of them fell to the black baboons, though.》

“So that’s why no one’s said that they found the bandit king’s treasure.”

《Indeed.》

“So you think that the cave that Dora-chan found has the bandit king’s treasure in it?”

《Well, yes.》

.....Sounds plausible. I mean, the entire reason why Demiurge told me to come here was as thanks for the offerings, too.

With that in mind, I could only imagine this would benefit me.

“The bandit king’s treasure, huh...?”

Sounds fun.

《Hehahahaha! I hear what you're saying! That sounds great! As of yet unfound treasure? Sui, it isn't a dungeon but this is gonna be fun!》

《Fun? Sui wants to do it too!》

《So let's hurry up and go!》

《**Indeed.**》

《Let's go!》

“Nonono, hold your horses. I know you're all excited to go, but we only have an hour of daylight left. There's no way we can climb a mountain in the dark, right? We're doing it tomorrow. Tomorrow.”

《**Mrr, there is no other choice, I suppose.**》

《Well, I'm hungry too, so I'm okay with doing it tomorrow...》

《Sui is also hungry, we can do it tomorrow.》 With that, it was decided that we'd climb the mountain tomorrow.

I was totally on board with doing this since the bandit king's treasure interested me too, but before that...

“How are we even going to climb this mountain?”

This one looks impossible to scale unless you're a pro mountain climber...



《**Okay. Time for food.**》

《I'm hungry!》

《Sui is hungryyy!》

“Yeah, yeah, I know already. ...Brrr, so cold.” As one might expect from the foot of a mountain, the billowing wind was chilly and pierced my body.

I was thinking of just making do with what I had premade, but in this cold weather I wanted something to warm me up.

And for something that was simple but warming, it had to be hot pot.

Yeah, let's do hot pot for tonight.

With that decided, I opened up my Online Supermarket. As I was looking through the soup choices...

“Tomato hot pot? I’ve tried it before, and I remember it being pretty good. Yeah, an exotic flavor like this is nice every once in a while. This is the kind I tried before, right?” I was looking at a tomato hot-pot soup from a brand famous for ketchup and tomato juice.

When I had it before, the deep flavor and sweetness of ripe tomato went perfectly with the soup’s contents like vegetables and meat.

I also looked at a soup from a famous yakiniku brand. The description for this one said that it used ripe tomatoes and basil for a well-rounded and mild soup.

“This one looks good too. Maybe I should get both and compare them?” With that idea, I bought both.

For the contents, I decided on cabbage, onions, carrots, broccoli, shimeji mushrooms, sausages, and cockatrice meat.

Cut the cockatrice meat into bite-sized pieces, the cabbage into rough chunks, the onions into wedges, and the carrots into 5mm discs. Separate the broccoli into smaller pieces and untangle the shimeji mushrooms after removing the foot. As for the sausages, cut them into slices diagonally.

After that, add the tomato soup to the clay pot and bring it to a boil. Once the pot is nice and bubbling, put in the cockatrice meat, sausages, and carrots in that order. When those ingredients have been cooked somewhat, throw in the rest of the vegetables and continue to simmer the whole pot until everything’s been boiled well. Once that’s done, sprinkle some cheese on top to finish it.

The bubbling tomato soup would turn the melting cheese into a gooey and delicious cover.

Gulp.....

“It looks really good.”

《**Hey, is it done yet?**》

《Hurry up so we can eat it.》

《It looks goooood!》 My familiars were peeking over my shoulder, lured in by

the smell.

Fel and Dora-chan were even drooling.

“Hey come on, you two’re drooling. Wait, stop that! It’ll get in the pot!” I said, and both of them hurriedly wiped off their drool.

Then...

《**W-We are not drooling. Not at all.**》

《Y-Yeah!》 They said.

Umm, you clearly were...

《Masterrr, Sui is hungry. Let’s eat already.》

“Ahh, sure, sure. Just wait a second.” Hurried along by Sui, I placed two pots in front of each of them.

《**Are these both the same?**》

“No. They’re both tomato hot-pot, but this one has a soup with an herb called basil in it.”

《**They look quite appetizing.**》

《Smells great too!》

《**Indeed. It is unpleasant how many vegetables there are, but it still smells nice. For now, I will try it.**》

“Sure, eat up. The vegetables are delicious too, you know? Ah, they’re hot so be careful.” Fel and Dora-chan used wind magic to cool down the food, while Sui ignored the heat completely and just started eating.

《Wooww~, this is delicious!》 It seemed like Sui really liked the food.

《**Mnrr, hurry and cool down!**》

《It’s times like these that I get really jealous of Sui, who doesn’t care about heat.》 The two of them muttered. Before long, their food was finally cool enough, and Fel and Dora-chan started eating.

《**Yes... Yes, this will do.**》

“Will do”? When you’re scarfing it down like that?

《Ohh~! This is great. This cheese thing is amazing with this red soup!》Dora-chan moaned in pleasure while tasting the combination of melty cheese and tomato soup.

Well, of course. There's no way tomato and cheese wouldn't fit. I should eat too.

I started with the one that used the soup I had eaten before, from the brand that was famous for ketchup and tomato juice.

Yeah, I remember this taste.

There was a deep flavor behind the sweetness, and it was good.

Setting aside all the extraneous stuff, the soup and the melted cheese wrapped around these vegetables with some cockatrice meat is really delicious. Lemme just get some soup by itself.....

“Ahh~, that hits the spot.” It was good, I had no complaints.

Next, I tried the hot pot with the soup from the famous yakiniku brand.

“Yeah, I can taste the basil.” The basil taste made this one lean more into adult taste buds.

In my opinion, kids would like the other soup, which had a universal appeal.

But that didn't change the fact that this was tomato soup, so the combination of soup and fillings covered in melted cheese was delicious.

“Hmm, they're both good. As I thought, you can't go wrong with the tomato and cheese combo. Wait, then...” I took out some simple bread made with whole wheat flour that I bought from Rosenthal's orphanage.

Just dip this in the tomato soup...

“Yep, just as good as I thought it'd be. Bread soaked in tomato soup is soooo good.”

《**Mn? Is that good? I want some too.**》

《Me too!》

《Sui too!》 Their senses were sharp, and they caught me trying out the bread, so they all requested their own.

“Sure thing. Ah, but there’s still the finisher, so control yourselves. I’ve got two different types this time.”

《**Ohh, I am looking forward to that.**》

《Finisher? You mean that thing we do at the end? That’s pretty good too.》

《Sui is looking forward to it~!》

After that, my familiars all had several more bowls before we could finally start the finisher. I’d prepared both rice and pasta for this stage.

“Put rice in this soup and simmer it for a bit...” For the soup from the famous tomato juice brand, I put in cold rice to make a faux risotto.

“And put pasta in this soup before cooking it a little...” For the soup from the famous yakiniku brand, I put in some very al dente pasta and finished cooking it in the soup for a soup pasta.

The finisher risotto and pasta, which had the flavors of the soup with cockatrice meat and vegetables soaked into it, was very well received by my familiars.

Fel and Sui had me reverse my choice and put pasta in the famous tomato juice brand and rice in the famous yakiniku sauce brand and enjoyed that instead.

Once we were full and warmed up by the soup, I quickly used Earth magic to make my box-shaped little house, spread my futon inside, and went to sleep early in preparation for tomorrow.



With breakfast finished, we were just about to set off up the mountain, but...

“How are we supposed to climb this?” The rough rock face was at such a steep angle it was almost vertical. I had no confidence that I could climb it, especially with no experience.

《**Hmph, this is easy. Just ride on my back, as you always do.**》

“Well, if that’s all I need to do...” Fel was very confident, so I just climbed on his back like usual.

Of course, Sui was in my bag.

《Then I'll go on ahead.》 Dora-chan said before flying off towards the cave.

《**We are going too.**》 Fel said before jumping mightily.

“Huh? W-Wait a second..... GYAHHHHH! IS THIS WHAT YOU MEANT BY CLIMBIIIIINNNGGG?!” Fel was, as always, Fel.

He didn't even seem to care about how steep the slope was, he simply ran up the wall like it was flat.

.....

“I... I thought I was gonna die...” Fel finally stopped when we were right in front of the wall where the cave was.

《**My word, you just would not stop shouting in my ear. You are way too noisy.**》

“IT'S NOT LIKE I WANTED TO SHOUT!”

《**Hmph, how pathetic.**》

Well soorrryyy for being 'pathetic.' What's scary is scary, okay? It was like a rollercoaster that did nothing but climb at full speed. I made it a point to never, ever, ever get on roller coasters, so I'd actually like an apology almost.

“Well, it's great that we managed to get this far, but no matter how you slice it, it'll be impossible to go any farther.” While the slope leading up here was steep, the wall in front of us was pretty much actually vertical.

The impression it gave off up close was wildly different from how it looked from a distance. It was intimidating.

《Heeyyy, what the hell're you guys doooinggg?! It's right heeerreee! Come up alreaaddy!》 Dora-chan came in through telepathy. He looked like a small grain from this distance.

《**Indeed. We are coming to you now.**》

“H-H-H-H-Hey! Going?! That's impossible! Let's just give up!” While I was interested in the bandit king's treasure, I felt that there was no choice but to give up in the face of this impassable obstacle.

《**What nonsense are you spouting? Look at all the footholds, this is easy.**》

.....*Wha? Footholds? On this sheer wall?*

“Hey, uhhh... Are you going blind, Fel? Where are these mythical footholds you speak of, on this smooth and sheer rock wall?”

《**Mrr, look at how many there are. Do you have holes in your head instead of eyes?**》

“Really now... where?” I facetiously pretended like I was interested and made a show of looking closer, but I still couldn’t see anything. Nothing that looked like it could be used as a foothold.

《***Sigh* Whatever. Just get on.**》

“Whaaat?”

《**Shut up and get on!**》 Fel prodded me with his nose and forced me to get on his back.

When I did, Fel jumped up with light movements, almost like a bunny.

“Huh?” He cleared ten meters with his jump before placing his paws on a small bump in the wall that would in no way be considered a foothold to anyone else and easily jumped up again.

“# \$ ○ & ♪ × ¥ ▲ ◎ !!!” I was so surprised I couldn’t even form words. All that left my mouth was unintelligible screaming.

Fel showed no signs of minding me and simply kept jumping.

《You’re finally here.》 Dora-chan was waiting for us when we finally got into the entrance of the cave.

《**Sorry to keep you waiting.**》

《Hey, what’s got him so scared?》 Dora-chan asked after seeing me, slumped near lifelessly on Fel’s back.

《**He just has no guts.**》

“Urrghh...” ‘That’s just unreasonable, Fel. Don’t you dare put us on the same pedestal! I’m normal!’ is what I wanted to say.

But I couldn't muster the energy to at the moment.

《**Hey, hurry and get off.**》 Fel said, shaking his body.

I couldn't muster the strength to hang on, so I fell to the ground with a splat.

Owww... You could have been nicer about that.

"Urrghhh~..."

Agghh, nope. Can't move. I can't get up.

《Heeeyyy. Come on, get it together.》

《Are we there?》

.....You know, I am supposed to be your master here. I seriously think that the way you all treat me sometimes is just awful. It'd be nice if at least Sui would worry about me instead of getting all excited about the cave.

《**Hey, why are you still on the floor like that? Get up already.**》

"Urgh..." You can yell at me all you want but I can't get up. Actually, you can help. Get your damn foot off me.

《**Hey.**》 *Skoosh*

"Urghh... Fff...ace... Get off....."

《Crap. He's not getting up. Looks like we're stuck here until he revives.》

《**Good grief, this human.....**》

《Masterrr, you okay?》

I'm not. Not at all, my dear Sui.

In the end, it took quite a while for me to be able to get back up.

"Whew. We can finally move on."

《**Finally. Hey, thanks to you we wasted so much time that I am hungry again.**》

《Me too.》

《Sui is also hungry!》

"You think it's my fault?! No way..."

《Mm? Did you say something? Hurry and cook. I want food.》

You're the one at fault, Fel. It's all because you had to climb in such a ridiculous and life-threatening way!

“Grrrrrr.....” *Fel you idiot!* Is what I wanted to say, but I was a coward and he was a legendary beast.

After that exchange, I was pestered into making food. I used some spicy vegetable stir fry that I'd premade to construct rice bowls.

“Here, a spicy vegetable stir fry rice bowl.”

《Oh, looks good!》

《Yayyyy!》

《Hey, why is there less meat in my share?》

“.....Looks normal to me.”



After we filled up it was time to explore the cave. Fel took the lead as we moved forwards. The deeper we went, the darker it got.

“Wait a second.”

《What is it?》

“Well, unlike in a dungeon, it's pretty dark in here so I'm going to turn on the lights.” I took out a flashlight I bought from my Online Supermarket from my Item Box and switched it on.

“Woah!” The first thing my flashlight shined on was a skeleton. “That surprised me! Are these the skeletons Dora-chan talked about?”

《Yeah.》 There were three skeletons in leather armor and robes that had been weathered to bits.

Beside the skeletons was a spear that had rusted with the passage of time as well.

“Stuck with a spear, huh? These are some seriously vicious traps.” *It'd be impossible to dodge a trap that throws out multiple spears at once unless you've*

got really great reflexes.

《**Why not just defend against the spears?**》

《Yeah. Or you could dodge them.》

“The both of you say that like it’s simple, but not everybody’s like you two.” I looked at the bones and considered that I might be next, and I shivered.

“Oh yeah, there’s supposed to be traps from now on, right? Will I be okay?” It wouldn’t be funny if I fell into a trap and died.

《**Do you not have your perfect defense skill?**》

“Well yeah, but didn’t you tell me something before, Fel? That it only defends against those with malicious intent? That’s why it worked in the dungeon, but... This isn’t a dungeon, right?”

《**Well, that is true. But I believe a trap set by humans should be the same...**》

“You *believe*? My life is on the line here, you realize? If I die because of this, I’m definitely coming back to haunt you!”

《**Mrr, then I will apply a barrier on you. As well as Dora and Sui.**》

《Oh, thanks.》

《Thanks uncle Fel!》

“Great, with this I’m safe. Thanks, Fel.”

《**Right. It should not break under any trap a human could devise, so rest assured. Still, though, I wish you would be just a little braver.**》

Oh shut up. I’m just on the careful side.

《**We are proceeding.**》

“Okay.” With Fel in the lead, we continued further into the cave.



Clang clang clang clang clang!

Countless marble-sized rocks smacked off of Fel’s barriers, raising up a huge clamor.

《Again? Man, that bandit king or whatever really doesn't want to let go of his treasure, does he? Not even dungeons have this many traps.》Dora-chan said, exasperated.

Ever since we entered the cave, it'd just been one trap after another. Spears would be launched from the walls, huge gouts of fire would appear, or even gigantic razor-sharp blades like guillotines would fall from the ceiling... At any rate, there was a huge number of traps of all kinds. On top of that, each one would result in instant death.

“This would have been seriously dangerous without Fel's barrier...” While I did have Perfect Defense, Fel said he only ‘believed’ it would be fine, after all.

Believed! He ‘believed’!

And if I wanted to test that out I'd die instantly.

As if I could do something as scary as that.

That's just how brutal these traps were.

《True... If it was me, Fel, or Sui, we probably could've just stuck it out and made do, but you'd probably be dead.》Dora-chan replied after overhearing what I muttered to myself.

But...

“I'd appreciate it if you didn't say that I'd probably be dead so casually like that.”

《Hahaha, my bad.》

《**It was a good move on my part to use these barriers. They are not unavoidable, but dealing with this many traps is a pain.**》Fel also looked fed up with the sheer number of traps we were seeing.

《Looks like Sui's the only one having fun.》

“Yeah.”

《**Sui is a truly brave slime.**》From the top, that was Dora-chan, me, and Fel.

All of us were looking back at Sui, who was bringing up the rear, bouncing along merrily.

《What's wrong, everybody? Let's hurry up and gooo! I wonder what the next one will be like?》Sui might have felt like all these brutal traps were nothing more than amusement park attractions.



It was even jumping into traps by itself out of interest.

When Sui purposely jumped into a trap that had something that looked like acid falling from the ceiling, I was naturally terrified for it. Though, Sui just absorbed all the acidic liquid into itself like it was nothing.

It even turned back to us, who were all surprised, and said, «This place is fun!»

Even though I knew quite well that Sui was not normal and a special individual, but even so, we'd raised it to be very strong.

“Well, it is Sui...”

«Yeah.»

«**Indeed.**» Somehow, we still didn't question it because it was Sui.

“Still, are we seriously not at this bandit whatever's treasure?” In my estimation, we were quite a ways into this cave by now.

«**There seems to be something like a room a little ways ahead. That must be it.**»

«So we can finally take a gander at the bandit king's treasure...»

Click

The ground under my foot made a sound...

Something rattled as the floor gave way.

“Huh? Waaaaaaghhh!”

«**Mm?**» Right before I fell, Fel grabbed on to my collar and pulled me up.

I slumped to the floor.

“Th-That was close...”

«**My barriers can do nothing about a pitfall.**» Even if it could protect from attacks, it couldn't prevent a person from falling.

«Hey now. Be careful, will ya?»

“You can only say that because you can fly, Dora-chan. Even if I'm 'careful,'

there's no way to avoid this, okay?! ...Wait, huh? Where's Sui?"

《Ah! Maybe it fell?》

《**Indeed. I can sense Sui at the bottom of the hole.**》

"Whaaaat?! Sui fell?! SUIIIIIIII!!!" My eyes almost popped out of my head before I turned around and stared into the hole, calling for Sui.

"It's too dark, I can't see. Is Sui okay?!?"

《**What a racket you make... I can feel Sui with no difficulty. It is fine.**》

《How could you think Sui would die from this? Geez.》

"You say that, but..."

《Masterrr!》

"Sui?!" While I was busy being worried, Sui came jumping out of the hole while sticking to the wall after each hop.

Finally, it plopped down in front of me.

《That was fun!》

"Huh?"

According to Sui, 《Ummm, it was fun because it went whooosh and Sui fell!》

It should have taken quite a bit of damage from the fall, but when I asked if it was okay Sui just said, 《Sui is fine!》

《**I told you it would be fine, right?**》

《Yeah. There's no way anything would happen to Sui from just that.》

Ghh! You know, you two say that, but Sui's not even a year old! It's so young, of course I'll worry about it.

《**Let us hurry forward.**》 It seemed that Fel was completely done with the sheer number of traps we'd been seeing, and he wanted it to be over already.

After that, we made our way through several more traps before finally arriving at the treasure room.

《**There is a large space past this wall. That should be where the treasure is.**》

“So the treasure room is back there? But what about the wall?”

《**Hmph, just destroy it.**》 Fel confidently said, walking forward.

Clunk!

“Huh? That sound... another trap?!” To our right, what looked like a simple rock wall suddenly opened up, and a huge boulder came rolling out at us.

“Seriously?! The last one had to be this?!” *Just how spiteful is this bandit king?!*

《**Hmph! How impertinent!**》 *Slash*

Fel’s Rending Claws easily decimated the boulder.

“Whew~, that gave me a scare. You saved us, Fel.”

《**It is a matter of course.**》

’Zat so?

《**There is the treasure room.**》 The Rending Claws Fel used not only destroyed the boulder, but also opened up the wall to the treasure room.

We all entered.

《Ohh~! There’s so much shiny gold!》

《So shiiinyyy!》 The room was overflowing with gold coins, rings, necklaces, crowns, tiaras, gems, and precious jewelry.

It was all piled up like a mountain.

And, like a king surrounded by treasure, there was a luxurious chair with a skeleton sitting in it placed at the center of it all.

“So that’s the bandit king... You can’t even bring your treasure with you to the next life, so I’d think that being surrounded by treasure like this would just be meaningless...”

《**That just goes to show how steeped in greed he was.**》

“Well, let’s get to gathering up the treasure. Help me out.” I handed Fel the magic bag and had all of them help me retrieve the riches before us.

《Yahhooo!》 Dora-chan dove into a mountain of gold coins.

《Yayyy!》 Imitating Dora-chan, Sui also dove in too.

“Hey, stop playing. I told you two to help.”

《**Dora is a dragon. He is probably being distracted by all the shiny objects.**》

“Ah, so it really is like that.”

《I’m not a maniac for this stuff like those huge dragons, but yeah, I don’t hate the shinies.》

“Hmmm~? Then you can keep something you like out of all of this. I wonder if one of these necklaces would fit on you?” I proffered him a necklace with a mithril chain and large diamonds.

This should fit on Dora-chan’s neck.

《Hmm, it’s not bad, but no, I’m fine. It’ll just get in the way.》

“I see. Then whatever. Just help picking it all up. I’ll be going for whatever’s over there.” I took the opposite side of the room from my familiars and started work.

“There’s some weird stuff mixed in. Is this stuff here magic tools?” There was a board with a magic circle on it, some strange box, and something that looked like a magic bag.

There was a lot of other stuff too, so I decided to just shove it all in my Item Box for now.

“What?! Why is this language here?!” I had a tablet in my hand that I was just about to throw into my Item Box.

It was inscribed with words from a language that shouldn’t exist in this world.



Extra: Salty Dog

I was given a request that designated me by name from the Adventurer's guild, and was currently on the way home to Karelina after finishing it. I'd already reported that the request was done, so there was no particular reason to hurry back and we decided to make a little detour.

We stopped by a place I'd been curious about for a while now, the town of salt, Mercadante.

Their specialty was rock salt. The stuff they produced was of high quality: soft and inoffensive with a mellow taste. It was considered a luxury product in this world.

So we came to this town with that rock salt as a goal.

First, we visited the Adventurer's guild to explain why we were there.

Even though it was mostly thanks to Fel, I was still an S-ranked adventurer at least in name, after all.

Not to mention I had a standing request from the guildmaster from Karelina, who I was indebted to, to take on requests that had been sitting for long periods in adventurer's guilds for towns I visited.

So, I decided to visit the Adventurer's guild here in Mercadante first thing and found out that I'd just missed seeing an A-ranked party that was here before us. Apparently that A-ranked party took on a high-level request, so there was nothing for me to do at the moment.

I was told that they were recently rumored to be near S-rank thanks to all the feats they were credited with. It seemed that they themselves were aware of these rumors, so they were aggressively taking high ranking requests. Mercadante's guildmaster was saying all this with a very satisfied expression.

Personally I thought it was a lucky thing and I wanted to do a little jig, but my familiars seemed unhappy about it.

You know that expression doesn't help anyone. They don't have what they don't have.

The next place we visited was the Merchant's guild. Our purpose was to rent a home to use as a base while we were in this town. We were introduced to a 7LDK and a 9LDK property. Both were 60 gold a week in rent, though they were slightly smaller than the properties I usually rented. Still, either would be large enough for the largest of us, Fel, to relax comfortably in, so there was no problem.

After seeing both properties, it was easy to choose between them. I ended up picking the 7LDK property. The fact that it was close to the market clinched it. I paid up front and got the key to the house. And that took care of my preliminary business here.

Like that, I secured a place to sleep in Mercadante, so we quickly visited the market.



As if being dragged along by their sense of smell, the gluttonous trio went straight for the corner where the food stalls were concentrated. Even though we came for their specialty salt, they could not be made to wait. Though I mostly blame the smell of cooking meat. That hit went straight to their stomachs. As always, the gluttonous trio begged with furious tenacity, and in the end, I caved and had to buy food for them.

The stall that caught their eye was one that sold well-grilled cockatrice that looked truly appetizing. Even while feeling a little exasperated at how hard the gluttonous trio were staring at the food, I went to buy a large amount of it since they never ever settled for a normal amount. I was feeling a little peckish, so I bought one for myself too.

I bit into the slightly burned meat.

“Delish...” It was a simple dish where they salted cockatrice meat and grilled it, but it was very delicious. The skin was crispy, and the meat was moist and juicy. It was perfectly cooked, and every chew filled my mouth with more meat juice. And since such perfectly cooked cockatrice was seasoned with this town's specialty salt, it gained a corresponding amount of taste.

《Hm. Not bad.》

《Yeah. I love how it's just a little burnt.》

《It's good, isn't it~?》 The gluttonous trio were happily munching away at the meat.

"This meat is cooked perfectly, right~? It's hard to believe they only use salt," I said as I ate the cockatrice meat, impressed.

"Aww, you're making me blush young fella!" The man at the stall must have heard my mutterings since he called out to me with a full-faced smile.

"Oh mannn~, this really was delicious. The skin is crispy while the meat is juicy, it was so perfectly cooked."

"Well I have been doing this for 30 years~!"

"Of course, you're using this town's salt, right?"

"Of course! This rock salt is the source of our town's pride, after all! Not only that, but I'm using really choice picks that I selected myself!" Seeing the stall guy look so proud, I decided to do some research and asked him which store he recommended I buy rock salt from.

"Well..." The guy gave me the names of two stores.

The first sold okay quality rock salt at a good price, and the other sold high-quality rock salt at a slightly expensive price.

After my familiars all finished their cockatrice, I immediately made my way over to the two stores he recommended.

I first visited the store that sold middling quality rock salt, Cedarholm trading company. I had my familiars wait outside and went into the store proper by myself.

The salt in the store was just as the stall guy said, of passable quality. While it had some strange color to it, it was well within acceptable parameters. There wasn't any sand mixed inside, so there was basically no problem with it.

I'd taken some time to research whether there was any usable salt in this world, since I was pretty picky about what I used personally. There were places

that would sell salt that clearly had sand mixed in, or reddish-brown salt that probably had dirt in it, with a completely straight face. On top of that, they'd set the prices for that bad salt stupidly high.

Since I kept running into cases like that, I'd kept to my Online Supermarket salt this entire time.

But this town had salt as their specialty. Probably thanks to that, they didn't try to commit any such scam.

Even so, compared to the stores along the street that I checked, the places that the stall guy recommended were much better priced for their quality.

At the first store, I ended up buying a small bag that contained a chunk of rock salt that had been shattered and crushed into smaller pieces, as well as two large chunks of rock salt.

While I was feeling rather satisfied with my purchases, I made my way to the next stop: the shop with high-quality salt at slightly expensive prices, Edgeworth trading company. Here, I also had my familiars wait outside while I went in alone.

Hmm, seems like a store aimed at the wealthy... The interior has some class.

Just as the stall guy said, the prices were kind of high, but the rock salt was also of excellent quality. I saw nothing that had sand mixed inside, or any discoloration at all. It was comparable to the salt sold by my Skill. With that thought in mind, I tried some of the salt at the behest of the employee.

I touched just a bit on my tongue, and...

"Mm!" The salt was mild with a slight umami taste.

"Delicious..." It was all the more surprising because all the salt I'd seen in this world up until now was so disappointing.

Seeing my surprised expression, the employee looked triumphant. There was no doubt that he was very proud of the salt's quality.

But still, this might actually be better than the rock salt that's sold by my Online Supermarket.

Of course, I bought it.

I bought the same amount as I did from the last store, a small bag of crushed salt along with two larger chunks of rock salt a little bigger than my fist. Given that it was salt, I spent quite a bit, but I had no regrets.

Thanks to Fel and the others, I had way more money than I knew what to do with, and none of them would complain about me buying anything that would make their meals better. Rather, since they had such refined palates they'd probably tell me to buy more.

Oh man~, I really got some nice stuff here. That guy at the stall made some great recommendations. It really is best to ask a local for stuff like this, isn't it? They're the most in touch with their area, after all.

With a satisfied expression I left the Edgeworth trading company and met up with Fel and the others.

《**Seeing you grin like that is freakish.**》 Fel said something incredibly mean after taking one look at me.

“Don't say freakish, that's rude. I'm just happy because I bought something nice, okay? I got some good salt, so it'll affect your meals too, you know?”

《**What?!**》 As soon as I brought up that point, not only Fel but all three of my familiars jumped forward.

“Hmm, I wonder just how delicious a steak would be with this salt and some pepper~?” *Since I got salt this good, something simple would be best to let you taste the ingredient more clearly, wouldn't it? Which means it has to be steak, for this gluttonous trio that just loves loves LOVES meat.*

《**Okay. We are going home now.**》

《Yeah. Then you can cook us steak.》

《Steak!》

“W-W-Wait! Stop pushing me!” Fel, who wanted to go back as soon as possible to get steak, was using his head to push me forward.

Following that, Dora-chan and Sui also started pushing me.

“Wai-! Come on, stop pushing me, all of you!” While I was close to falling over forwards trying to resist Fel and the others, I felt a sudden chill.

I sensed that someone was watching us.

Wondering what that feeling was, I looked around, and...

“Eep...!” Composed of bearded and well-built tiny old men, a group of dwarves was staring at me with glinting eyes.

Surprised, I took Fel and the others and pretty much ran all the way home.

After getting back, I wondered to myself, “What the hell was that?” But the gluttonous trio wouldn’t stop pestering me so I ended up having to cook them steaks, erasing all thoughts of the group of dwarves from my head.

By the way, the wyvern steaks with this town’s salt and some freshly ground pepper had my familiars in ecstasy as they ate.



By the next day, the dwarf group had completely disappeared from my head, so I took my familiars along to buy more of the salt I got yesterday, since it was so delicious.

The salt everyone liked best was the slightly expensive stuff from the Edgeworth trading company. So, I bought three times the amount that I bought yesterday from them. It might have honestly been too much, but I figured I might want extra to give to everyone waiting at my home in Karelina on top of securing more for our food. Well, by ‘everyone waiting,’ I meant I’d probably just be handing it to Thereza and Aija, who handled all the cooking. After all, salt was a daily necessity, and if I gave them salt this good, they’d be able to live even richer lives.

I stocked up with that in mind. I considered spending some time just wandering around the market window shopping when I was assaulted by chills once again.

I fearfully looked around, and...

“Eep!” The same dwarf group as yesterday was once again watching me with glinting eyes.

Wait no, aren’t there more than yesterday? What the hell~?!

I hid behind Fel’s large body and used him as a shield as we passed by the

dwarves. Once we were some distance away from the dwarf group, I finally breathed a sigh of relief.

《**Hey, why are they all glaring at you?**》

“I don’t know. I’d like to ask them myself.”

《**What? Did you just do something without realizing it?**》

“I didn’t! Probably.....” Something I didn’t realize? I mean..... At the very least I definitely never did something that would lead to dwarves glaring at me like that. In the first place, I don’t know anyone here and I can count the number of people I’ve talked to on two hands. And there wasn’t a single dwarf among them. And I mean, how could I mess up so badly as to be treated like that just for a little conversation?

The more I thought about it, the less I understood.

Dwarves were basically all about crafting and alcohol. Outside of that, I didn’t feel like there was much you could do to earn their ire, which was why I was so confused. I never talked to or even met any dwarves in this town, so there was no way that I angered them in either of those ways.....

“Ah!” Wait, could it be that? Seriously? That?! I thought of the liquor store that I ran as a hobby. Since it was just a hobby, it was up to me when I wanted to open it and where. At the moment, I just opened up whenever I had free time in a town I visited and I felt up to it.

All the liquor I sold was bought from the Liquor Shop Tanaka, a Tenant from my Online Supermarket. And since I thought it would be annoying to start any rumors and I didn’t want to stir up a fuss, I tried setting a lot of different rules, but as they say, you can’t put a stopper on people’s mouths.

Among the people who actually came to the store, there were some who knew who I was. After all, I was an S-rank adventurer, even if I didn’t deserve it.

Hmmm... Considering that, it was getting more and more likely this had something to do with the liquor store I ran as a hobby.

Since the thought crossed my mind, I hesitantly looked back to where the dwarf group was.

They're still theerreeeee! And they're still looking at me!

Gathering up my courage, I made a gesture at them like I was drinking liquor, and...

The dwarf group's eyes all snapped wide open and they nodded furiously.

.....Ahhh, it really was about booze.

Now that I knew the reason, it was honestly kind of a letdown.

Still, a dwarf's tenacity for alcohol was frightening.

I never planned to open up the liquor store in this town, but if I didn't, that group of dwarves would undoubtedly wail and lament in sorrow.

I couldn't help but laugh bitterly, since I could see that happening so easily.

Oh fine, I guess I'll open up the store for once.

But it would take some preparation, so I couldn't just do it tonight. *Maybe I'll have it open tomorrow night?*

After some shopping in the market, I decided to go back and prepare to open my liquor store.



《In that case, we will be sleeping in the back.》

"Okay." Once again, I rented a warehouse and opened up shop.

Warehouses tended to be on the outskirts of town, so I had my familiars along with me as a guard.

I never planned to open up a liquor store, so Fel and the others (especially Fel) were rather annoyed. Their attitudes shifted 180 degrees as soon as I said I'd make dragon steak, though.

That just showed how delicious dragon steak was, but it was a complicated feeling knowing how easy a legendary Fenrir was to please.

At any rate, the dragon steak seasoned with this town's specialty salt and some black pepper was so good I lost the ability to speak for a moment.

But setting that aside, I needed to prepare to open up shop.

On top of a wooden table, I lined up the liquors I procured from Liquor Shop Tanaka: Whiskey, Brandy, Rum, Gin, Wine, Beer, Sake, and Umeshu.

These were for sampling. Since I was basically only selling stuff that didn't exist in this world, I figured it would be hard to commit to buying things you didn't know the taste of.

It seemed to me that the people of this town had been stretching the limits of their patience waiting, so I prepared the largest assortment ever for them.

But dwarves would always try everything first, so it was a complicated feeling seeing the pile of empty bottles after every customer.

Also, I had an idea in the spur of the moment and decided to try it out.

I was going to use this town's specialty salt in a cocktail as a welcoming drink.

So, the plan was to get those ready right now.

I had the ingredients for it, so all I needed to do was assemble.

Even though I said it was a cocktail, I didn't need any tools like a shaker or anything.

It was something that could easily be made even by a layman like me, and I'd actually tried it before when I got a random craving for it.

I prepared some clear lowball glasses bought from my skill.

I rubbed some lemon on the rims.

Then, I put some salt I bought from this town on a flat plate and dipped the rim of the glasses in it. The name of this technique was called something like 'snow style.'

I put some ice I had Fel make inside these salted glasses. I had him make slightly large chunks that would fit the glass.

If I had them too small, they would melt faster and dilute the drink, so I made sure that didn't happen.

After adding ice to the glass, I poured in grapefruit juice and vodka in a two-to-one ratio and stirred the drink lightly to finish.

"Yeah, it looks good. It's a salty dog for sure." I made a total of 12. One for

me, and another 11 for the maximum number of people that could be in the store.

“Gotta make sure it tastes good.” Though I also just kind of wanted to drink some.

I hadn’t had a salty dog in a long while.

“Yeah, it’s perfect.”



Whoops. Gotta make sure not to drink too much.

Salty dogs were delicious and went down easy, so it was just as easy to overconsume. Especially since its alcohol content was pretty high. After all, its base was vodka.

I myself once had too many salty dogs and made a mistake. It didn't turn out too badly since I was drinking at home, but I had too many salty dogs to the point that I got blackout drunk and when I woke up, I found myself draped over the toilet. My head hurt and I felt gross, especially since I had to wonder why I spent the night on the toilet. It was an awful feeling. Ever since then, I was careful of consuming salty dogs.

I had to be extra careful today since I'd be receiving customers.

"Now then, I'm ready. All I have to do is sit down and wait for customers." As soon as I made to sit down, I heard banging on the door.

Apparently I didn't even have time to wait.

"Password?" As always, I asked for the password.

"Atsugiri negi shiotan." A low voice answered back with the password.

It was a set of words that meant nothing to the people of this world. Since coming up with a good one was a pain, I just decided to follow along with the yakiniku theme that I'd been using. This time's was "Thick cut salted beef tongues with onion."

When I opened the door, an avalanche of dwarves rushed in.

They'd kept exactly to the limit of one person who was introduced to the store and ten of their friends.

"Finally... Finally!"

"Ahhh~! I swore to myself I wouldn't die until I managed to come here!"

"Booze! Booze!"

"I'm gonna empty my wallet!"

"This chance won't come up often. I pulled together all the money I could from the house." The dwarves were all in a party mood as they talked excitedly.

“Welcome. First, as a gesture of hospitality please try these cocktails made with your town’s specialty rock salt.” I showed the customers to seats at a long table, like those you would see at a cafeteria.

They all sat, and I served them the salty dogs from my Item Box.

“Ohh~! There’s salt on the rim!”

“It’s alcohol diluted with fruit juice? Seems like it’d be popular with women.”

“This glass is more amazing. Whoever made this did a great job.”

I had to warn these excited old dudes, so I said, “Unlike how it looks, it’s quite strong, so be careful,” but...

They didn’t listen and all downed their drinks in one go.

“Aahhhhh! It’s easy to drink and feels pretty refreshing!”

“Indeed. Since it’s diluted with fruit juice it’s nice on the palate!”

“This is perfect as a warm-up for trying the hard stuff.” I was so disappointed seeing the old dwarves downing the salty dogs in one go and excitedly sharing their impressions with each other.

Right... That’s right... This is just what dwarves are like...

I regrouped and started presenting, giving them explanations on everything that seemed necessary.

I told them that all the liquor they saw could be sampled.

I said that they were only allowed to try each one once. This was a rule I added on recently, since some people would come back to the same bottle over and over to ‘sample’ it, I had to make sure they only got to try each one once.

Also, the glasses I prepared to sample the liquors were lowball glasses that were about the same size as the ones I used for the customers’ salty dogs.

At first, I used shot glasses, but it ended up being really unpopular with the dwarves, so I changed to lowball glasses and decided to only half fill them.

I continued on to say that any bottles that they liked could be purchased at an amount of up to ten bottles per type per person.

And lastly, I reminded them, “I believe you all know the rules of this store, but I must insist that you take care and abide by all of them.”

Well, all the rules basically said was not to ask too many questions about the source of my liquor or really any other prying questions and just quietly enjoy the booze.

The old dwarves all nodded with solemn expressions, but I knew that once I handed them all their sampling glasses, their eyes would start glinting and they’d grow restless.

Wow. You all realize that the liquor won’t up and leave on you or anything?

“Then let us start the tasting.” I was fairly sure they weren’t listening, but I said it just in case.

“All the liquors I have prepared today are rather high in alcohol content, and the ones to your right are especially strong, so please be warned.” On the right I had whiskey, brandy, rum, vodka, and gin.

Whiskey was very popular among all the dwarves, so I just naturally ended up selling a lot of really strong liquors.

“Well then, please go ahead.” It seemed like the customers this time had planned things out beforehand, as instead of splitting up and doing different things, they all lined up together for the same ones.

That in itself was fine, but even though I’d just warned them, they all started from the right side where the strongest stuff was.

Geez. Every time.

On top of that, they were starting with whiskey, which had always been the favorite of dwarves. I couldn’t tell if that was a coincidence or not.

The specific bottle was a label that was a famous Scotch whisky maker, and it was said to be the pinnacle of all single malt whiskies.

Even while worrying about how drinking this first would affect them, I poured samples into all their glasses.

“This is a whisky which has been very well received by your fellow dwarves.” They downed the entire glass in one shot.

Come on, it wouldn't kill you to savor the taste a bit more.

"Mm, the bouquet is great~!"

"Aahhhh~, delicious!"

"A strong taste. Hmm..."

"Too amazing....." The small old men all looked to be enraptured in their ecstasy.

When they finally came back down to earth, it was time for the next bottle.

After repeating that for a while...

.....

"Oh maannn~, I got some good stuff!"

"Aggghh, why didn't I bring more money?!"

"I sold off the mithril sword that I'd been keeping in the store for this day! I'm so happy!"

"I wanted all of it... I won't be able to rest until I get them, even if I die."

"I liked the whisky. I ended up getting all of the whiskies, haha."

Ahhh~, so tired. If you're done shopping, why won't you all just go home...?

There were the dwarves, who were still in the store happily chatting away, and me next to them, dead tired.

"Okay, then. Thanks, man!"

"Today was really fun!"

"Come back any time, you hear!" The dwarves all left the warehouse dragging along wooden boxes like family treasures while saying their goodbyes.

I saw them off outside the store, my expression stiff.

"They came in a carriage...?!" I saw them come in with the wooden boxes, but I never expected them to have brought a carriage.

You guys are way too well prepared.

The dwarves all left with satisfied expressions. After they'd completely gone, I

collapsed into a chair.

“I’ll clean up after I rest a bit. Still, I never expected them to try everything...”
The table was cluttered with empty bottles.

“This was the largest variety I’ve set up so far, so I really didn’t expect them to empty all of it. Damn, what the hell are dwarven livers made of?” I gained a newfound appreciation and fear for dwarven physiology.

Afterword

Hello, this is Eguchi Ren. Thank you all very much for purchasing *Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill* volume 9: *Grilled Entrails and the Festival of Gluttony*! We're already at volume 9, aren't we? *Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill* will soon have reached four years since publication. I never even dreamed that I would be continuing this series for so long. I know very well that it's thanks to all you readers that this series has been able to come this far. Thank you all so very much.

Volume 9 is focused around the "Meat dungeon" in Rosenthal, which almost exclusively drops meat. Given the gluttonous trio, whose only big weakness is their unbridled love of meat, it was only a matter of course that they'd rush to this place (lol).

Mukohda also makes contact with the kids of Rosenthal's orphanage, so there's some heartwarming scenes as well. I'd love it if you all looked forward to that too.

Also, along with volume 9, volume 6 of the main comic and volume 4 of the spinoff comic where Sui is the main character, *Sui's Great Adventure*, are also being released! Both the main and spinoff comic have been very well received, so as the original author I couldn't be happier.

I don't believe there's a need to repeat this, but both the main and spinoff comics are full of fun moments! Please give those series a try as well. I'm sure you'll all love it. I'm not exaggerating or anything! To Masa-sensei who drew all the illustrations, Akagishi K-sensei who is in charge of the main comic, Futaba Momo-sensei who draws the spinoff comic, my editor "I", and everyone else at Overlap: Thank you all so much for everything you do for me!

Lastly, I'd love it if you all continue to enjoy the laid back and heartwarming adventures of Mukohda, Fel, Dora-chan, and Sui in *Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill* in web novel, light novel, main comic, and spinoff comic forms.

I truly hope to see you all again in volume 10.

Bonus Short Stories

Mukohda's Cooking Class *Everyone's Favorite Eggs*

"Alright, then. Just something simple."

I was holding a cooking class in my kitchen. In attendance were Thereza and Aija, who were responsible for all my workers' (slaves') meals, as well as Selja, who recently started helping them.

As for why this happened, well, back when I welcomed all my workers into the house, I made them an easy meal that I honestly slacked on, but it was unexpectedly very well received (Apparently eggs were a really rare and high-quality ingredient, so they were incredibly hard to get). So, whenever it came time for me to provide them with food, I'd always make sure to hand some eggs over as well.

Since I was doing that, eggs became a huge favorite, and it seemed like they were eating eggs every day. I taught them some simple egg dishes like omelettes and scrambled eggs, but eggs sunny side up were always the most popular.

Apparently this was because while the dish itself was very simple, it showcased the flavor of eggs the best, and the flavor profile varied a lot depending on what was used to season it.

By the way, it also seemed that my workers were split down the middle between those who liked their eggs with worcestershire sauce and those who liked them with salt and pepper.

However, since they ate eggs every day, the topic came up that it would be nice to have a larger repertoire of egg dishes, so now Aija, Thereza, and Selja were here to learn from me.

"Do you remember how to make omelettes?"

"You just separate the yolk and shape it while you cook, right?"

“Like you told us, we’ve made it several times and covered it with tomato sauce.”

“How was it?” I asked. Thereza and Aija looked at each other, clearly hesitant to say.

Maybe they didn’t like it?

“It wasn’t bad, but everyone just said, ‘sunny side up eggs would be better for this...’”

“Ahhh~ I get it.”

Sunny side up eggs are really that popular? Even if all you do is crack open the egg and cook it? I think plain omelettes are good, though. Wait. Maybe it’s because the omelettes are plain that all the sunny side up egg enthusiasts are saying their favorite would be better? Then what I’m about to teach them will be perfect.

“Did you bring what I asked for?”

“Yes. You wanted sausages, so we brought them.”

“Great. Then I’m going to make an omelette, the thing that you all think is so mediocre. But, I’ll be using this sausage as well.”

Yes, I was going to make an omelette with filling.

It’d be perfectly substantial, and its taste would vary wildly depending on the filling, so I figured it would be way more satisfying than a plain omelette.



“First, cut the sausage into disks and cook it along with some minced onions.”

Once the sausage has browned a little and the onions have cooked sufficiently, move them to a plate off to the side.

“Next, crack some eggs into a bowl, and season with a little salt and pepper. Whisk the eggs well before adding in the cooked sausage and onions. Make sure you mix all the ingredients together thoroughly.”

The sausages in this world were rather salty, so I compensated by only seasoning the eggs a little.

After that, add some oil to a heated frying pan and cook the eggs and filling quickly and evenly using a spatula. Then, tilt up the frying pan so the omelette slides toward you, and fold the far end over to make the right shape.

With the shaping done, plate it, and add ketchup on top...

“This is an omelette with filling.” I presented the omelette to everyone for a taste test.

“It’s delicious...”

“Who would have expected it to change so much just by adding sausage?”

“.....”

Selja must have found it incredibly delicious, since she was scarfing it down without a word, even though she’d been rather hesitant at first.

“I only used sausage and onion this time, but you can use pretty much any meat you want as long as it’s been chopped up small. And for vegetables, carrots or potatoes would go well with this too, I think.”

“I see,” replied Aija and Thereza.

“Also, if you can get some, this’d be amazing with melted cheese.”

“Ahh, you mean what you used on the pizza?”

“Exactly. Melted cheese and eggs is really good, you know?” I said, causing Aija, Thereza, and Selja to all gulp.

“Would you like to try making some?” I offered, and everyone nodded with a smile.

Crack some eggs into a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Whisk it together reeeaaally well before adding in the cheese.

Then, just cook in a frying pan.

Aija and Thereza had spent a long time as housewives. As long as they understood the steps they were very good at cooking.

The shape of Aija’s omelette is a little broken up, but she should get better the more she practices.

“Personally, I always mix the fillings in with the eggs because that makes it easier to form the omelette shape, but once you’re used to it you can also try putting the filling into the frying pan after the egg’s been cooked and just folding it all up.”

Aija, Thereza, and Selja finished their omelettes with cheese and after taste testing them, they all heaped praise on the dish, saying, “Delicious!”

“Eggs pair well with a lot of different things, so you should all experiment as you like for the fillings. And just as a side note, I think the cheese would go very well with sausages,” I said.

“I see,” Aija replied. Thereza was also enthusiastic, saying, “I’ll definitely have to try that.”

Several days afterward, I was unexpectedly begged by my workers (slaves) to increase the amount of eggs and melting cheese I gave to them.

A Tempting Invitation

“Annnnd done.”

It’d been really hot for days now in Karelina. Though at least it wasn’t as bad as summers were in Japan, especially if you lived in the city, where you felt like you were being smothered in humidity.

Still, it’d been hard to sleep recently, so I bought a cooling pad from the Online Supermarket to spread on my mattress.

This should make things a little better.

“...I still have some free time. Let’s try it out.”

I got into bed on top of the pad.

“Ahhh~, it feels so cool and nice...” The cool feeling that enveloped my entire body already had me closing my eyes.

“Whoops. That was dangerous. I still have things I need to set up,” I sat up cross legged on the bed and grabbed a pillow.

“I made sure to buy a cooling pillow cover too~!” I muttered, retrieving the

cover from my Item Box.

While I was shopping for the pad, I found a pillow cover made of the same material, so I bought that too.

“And this too.”

After putting on the pillow cover, I took out a towel blanket. It was a really high-quality one that wouldn't fray and was soft to the touch. On top of that, it also felt nice and cool. It was something that I bought along with the cooling items from my Online Supermarket.

While the Online Supermarket sold mainly foodstuffs, if I looked closely I knew I could find all sorts of different things like this too. The selection of my skill shouldn't be underestimated.

While I was at it, I also bought a cooling t-shirt and sweatshorts set to use as pajamas.

“With these, I'll be able to sleep easy tonight,” I said to myself after having prepared all of my cooling sleeping goods.

Now that I was done, I could leave and do other things, but it was really hard to summon the will to do that.

“I guess I can spend a little more time here...” I made an excuse to myself as I lay down on the bed again.

“Aaahhh~, it feels so nice...” The overwhelming comfort once again had me closing my eyes. I started nodding off, but right before I fell asleep...

《Masterrr, are you taking a nap?》 A telepathic message rang in my head, and something poked at my cheek along with it.

“Mnaah? Oh, it's you Sui.”

《Nap?》 Sui asked, extending two tentacles to lightly smack both my cheeks.

“No. I'm just testing this out a little...”

《Test?》

“That's right, Sui. Doesn't this bed seem different from normal?”

《Mmm~... Ah! It feels kinda cool!》

“That it does. It’s been really hot recently, right? So I bought some cool stuff so we can sleep more comfortably. How do you like it?” I asked Sui, and it flattened out a little to feel the mat a bit better.

《It feels nice and cool~!》

“Right?”

《Hey hey masterrrr, let’s take a nap~!》

“A nap, huh? That’s a really tempting invitation, but...”

Maybe it’ll be fine? It’s only the middle of the day.

《It’s okay, right? Sui wants to take a nap with master...》 Sui bugged me cutely while using a tentacle to nudge my cheek, and...

“Hmmm, well, it’s still a little too early to start making dinner... I guess it’ll be fine to nap for a little while.”

《Masterrrr!》

“Yeah, okay. Let’s take a nap. But only for a little bit, okay?”

《Yayyyy!》 Sui said, waving around some tentacles like they were arms.

Then, Sui went flat and immediately fell asleep.

“Oh. Sui’s already gone.”

I chuckled to myself at how quickly Sui had fallen asleep before relaxing myself, settling into the comfortable bed. I was invited into dreamland almost as fast as Sui was.



《...up..... Wa-..... Wake...》

.....

《Hey, wake up!》

Awww whaaaat? Shut upppp...

《This guy just won’t wake up, will he? Aagghh, fine. I’ll do this.》

.....Urrgghh... Something cool is on my face. Excuse me, it’s kind of hard to

breathe over here.

I sprang up while trying to bat away whatever was on top of my face.

“Bwahh! Haahhh... hahhh... What the hell was that? Geez~...”

《Hey, sitting on his face totally worked!》

“You are finally awake, you idiot.”

I looked up while rubbing the sleepiness out of my eyes and met the gazes of Fel and Dora-chan.

“Oh, it’s just you two. Whadda ya want?”

“Do not say ‘whadda ya want’ to me!”

《Yeah! You know we totally lost you, only to find you here sleeping all nice with Sui!》

The two of them seemed really ticked for some reason.

“What about our dinner?!”

《I’m hungry over here, you know?!》

“Ahhh!!”

I realized that I’d fallen deeply asleep thanks to Sui’s tempting invitation, so deep that I’d completely forgotten about making dinner.

Still though, this cooling pad and stuff felt so nice~...

Secretly to myself, I thought that taking a nap might be a good idea now and then.

Pickling Vinegar

I was currently staring at a large pile of cucumbers. It was only a portion of the large amount of vegetables Alban presented to me every day.

The cucumbers grown by Alban were all a dark green color and very solid, but still really watery and fresh. It was obvious that they were all first rate products at a single glance.

Of course, their taste matched their appearance.

I'd been eating them in simple dishes every day, like in salads, semi-pickled, or just with some miso, but I was the only one eating these cucumbers, which were basically the symbol of all vegetables to eat raw.

All three of my familiars were super carnivores that wanted nothing but meat. It wasn't as if they couldn't have vegetables, but they would never willingly eat them. Fel was especially vehement in his dislike for vegetables. Even so, I persisted in introducing vegetables as much as I could into their diet for health purposes. I made sure to always pair them with my familiars' beloved meat, so they had to be cooked any time I served them.

Since that was the case, the cucumbers, which again were like the symbol of all vegetables eaten raw, just kept piling up...

That's why I was trying to think of a simple and easy way to enjoy cucumbers that wasn't in a salad, semi-pickled, or with miso.

That was when I saw something in my Online Supermarket.

That something being pickle vinegar.

It was stuff that could make pickles just by soaking vegetables in it.

Thinking that I'd be able to enjoy a different taste using all these Alban brand cucumbers, I bought it.

And that was how I got to where I was now, about to pickle vegetables in vinegar.

Usually you would just cut the vegetables and immerse them in the vinegar, but this time I wanted to try cutting the cucumbers into stylish sticks.

For that purpose, I also bought a more fitting jar with my skill.

"Cucumbers are obvious, but let's also pickle some carrots. Then..."

The recipe that came with the vinegar called for radishes, bell peppers, and mini tomatoes, didn't it?

Following the recipe, I added in the required vegetables.

I was having Alban raise a lot of different crops. Alban himself was really

interested in the seeds I got from my skill too, so he happily cultivated all of them.

Of course, I had Alban-raised daikon radish and bell peppers.

So I cut all the Alban-brand cucumbers, carrots, daikon radishes, and bell peppers into thin sticks. For the mini tomatoes, I simply removed the green part and left them as they were.

Once I stuffed the cut (and not cut) vegetables into the jar, I poured in the pickle vinegar. All I had to do after that was wait half a day.

I'm looking forward to how they turn out.



“Now then, how did it go~?”

I walked into the living room with the jar in my arms.

My familiars were currently feasting on some pancakes with lots of honey. They'd complained before that they were sick of pancakes, but in the end they were eating them anyway.

I'll obviously get fat if I follow their lead and just eat meat and sweet stuff for every meal. These pickles will be my treat for today.

I separated the different pickles onto their own plates.

Let's start with the standard cucumbers.

Crunch Crunch Snap Crunch

“Ohh~, that's good. It's definitely fully pickled. Of course, it's a little acidic because it's a pickle, but it's not too strong, and it's easy to eat. There's also a soft sweetness mixed with the acidity. Yeah, this is delicious.”

I moved on to the daikon radishes and carrots.

“They're good as Japanese semi-pickled *tsukemono*, but they're also good as western pickles. And this way they're more refreshing to the palate, so I never get tired of eating them. I should have these from now on whenever I'm having a western-style breakfast.”

《Hey, hey, master, what's that?》

“This? They’re called pickles. To make them I steeped some vegetables in vinegar.”

《Is it good?》

“Of course it is. It’s nice and refreshing! Want to try some Sui?” I offered some pickles to Sui, since it showed interest.

《**Do not bother. There is no way vegetables will be good.**》 After licking his chops clean to finish off the large number of honey topped pancakes he’d ingested, Fel commented with a disgusted look.

《I’d have to tell you to not bother too, to be honest. Like, they’re not inedible, but if you asked me whether they were delicious... And they’re raw too, you know? Raw vegetables all taste grassy, I hate them.》

Grrrr, Fel and Dora-chan are bad-mouthing vegetables so freely!

“You know, vegetables are good for your health! You all should eat vegetables every once in a while too!” I said, but Fel just fixed me with a flat stare.

“Wh-What?”

《**You... You say that a lot and try to force us to eat vegetables, but as you can see we are perfectly healthy without having to succumb to your insane predilections.**》

Dora-chan nodded in agreement.

And...

《**In the first place, we all have blessings from gods. We will never get sick even without eating vegetables.**》

Ah.....!

“I-It’s the feeling of it! The feeling! That kind of thing is important!”

《**.....You totally forgot, I see.**》

Sh-Shut up!

Back of the Box Recipe #1 *Baked Donuts*

《Hey, hey masterrrr, what's today's snack~?》Sui asked me while we were relaxing in the living room, even though it hadn't been that long since lunch.

“Snack, huh? I wonder~...”

These days, my familiars had started to consider it normal to have a snack at 3pm. Given that, I couldn't very well tell Sui that there'd be no snack, given how big its sweet tooth was.

The confections sold from my Online Supermarket or the cakes from Fumiya were fine ideas, but they were getting old. Also, my familiars all treated Fumiya's cakes more like an after-dinner treat, so it didn't really feel appropriate for a 3pm snack. Instead, for the past half a week or so, I'd been trying out cooking their snacks myself.

Still, sweets were outside my area of expertise. So the number of things I could make satisfactorily was very limited.

《Hey, do not be thinking of making pancakes again, got it?》

《Yeah, those aren't bad, but we just had them last time. I want something other than pancakes.》Dora-chan and Fel commented, seizing the initiative.

I figured they'd say that, since the last snack I made for them was pancakes. There was even a time when all I gave them were pancakes. After all, the only steps were to prepare the pancake mix and cook it. It was easy. Also, you could top them with lots of different things, like butter, maple syrup, honey, jam, and a variety of fruits.

But having them so often would make anyone tired of them, and my familiars started to push back.

At that point I'd already started stocking pancake mix, so I was a bit troubled as to how to use it all. That was when I saw a certain recipe written on the back of a pancake mix box. It was for a different but still easy snack I could make with the contents.

I'd never been more grateful to a food company than at that moment. Honestly, I was saved.

After that, I checked the other boxes of pancake mix I'd stocked up and found

a bunch of different recipes.

I cut them all out and filed them away to use as a trump card.

Heheheh. Looks like it's time.

"I'm not making pancakes. Just wait, you'll see."

《**Really?**》

《You better not be kidding.》

《What will it be? I wonder~? Sui is looking forward to it~!》



"I talked big, but now how do I back it up...?" I took out my recipe file from my Item Box and started flipping through it.

"Oh, how about this?" I picked out a recipe for baked donuts made with pancake mix.

If I make this, I can flavor it with cocoa powder, or chocolate chips, or dried fruits, or even tea. There'd be so many variations I could do!

"Okay, I'm making this. Hey, wait a second... Looks like it uses a mold? Does my Online Supermarket sell molds for baked donuts?"

I checked, and...

"They do."

I found a mold that allowed you to make six baked donuts at once.

Oh yeah, I remember that the bakery I frequented sold baked donuts, as did the dessert corner in my supermarket.

The donuts were healthier since they weren't fried in oil. And while I didn't really care about that, it had made them pretty popular recently.

I found a workable mold, and checked it out along with the other ingredients I needed.

"Great. Now I'm ready."

I was planning to make plain, chocolate chip, and tea-flavored baked donuts.

First, melt some unsalted butter.

Then, add the pancake mix, milk, eggs, sugar, and the melted butter into a bowl and whisk together until there are no more lumps.

Just that step finished the plain donuts. The recipe was super easy.

By mixing in chocolate chips, I could make chocolate chip baked donuts. Or I could mix in tea (This time it would be Earl Grey leaves. I just had to put the leaves in a vinyl bag and crush them with a rolling pin) to make tea-flavored baked donuts.

Once all three of the doughs are done, pour the dough into the mold after they've been brushed with oil. Since the donuts will apparently rise a lot, it's not necessary to fill the mold to the brim.

The last step is to preheat the oven and bake until the dough changes color and is properly cooked through. Then, after removing the molds from the oven and letting them cool, remove the donuts from the mold...

"Ohhh~, looks nice."

As the recipe stated, I made sure to sprinkle some powdered sugar on top of the plain baked donuts.

"Wow, they came out great." The donuts looked rather nice for something I'd just made for the first time.

The recipe also gave some advice on customization, saying that using almond powder, which was almonds crushed into dust, would give the donuts more depth of flavor. It also said that using soy milk instead of cow milk would make for a healthier donut.

Maybe I should try those out next time. But leaving that aside, I should taste test these donuts since they came out looking so nice.

I took a bite of a plain donut.

"Ohh~... It was so easy to make since I used the pancake mix, but the donuts are soft and airy and moist... They're delicious."

In my opinion, they'd be perfect as a snack with black coffee. I suppressed my desire to make some, and plated the rest of the baked donuts to bring out to

everyone.

“Snacks are done~.”

《Hm... A round snack with a hole in it?》

《That’s a weird shape.》

《There’s a hole~!》

“You see, these are called baked donuts. Anyway, just try them out,” I said, and they obliged.

《Hm... They are alright, I suppose. This one smells good.》

《Yeah, they aren’t bad. I like this one the best.》

“So Fel likes the tea flavor, and Dora-chan likes the chocolate chip baked donuts. What about you, Sui?”

《Ummm... All of them!》

“Haha, I see!”

It seemed like my first set of baked donuts passed muster. Though I was going to keep it a secret that these were super easy to make with the pancake mix.

Tempura

“Alriiiigghht! Tempura! Tempura time!!” In great spirits, I headed into the kitchen to start making Tempura for tonight’s dinner.

I’ve been looking forward to this since last night~.

Actually, yesterday I accompanied Fel and the others to the forest near Karelina for some hunting, and I got a little peckish while they were gone.

I started to really crave the taste of junk food, so I decided to have some cup ramen.

If the others were there, they’d all boo intensely at the thought of cup ramen as a meal, but I was alone this time.

So, I went shopping on my Online Supermarket and ended up picking a bowl of instant tempura soba.

I actually had a hard time deciding between the tempura soba and curry noodles, but in the end I decided on the first one.

It had been so long since I had cup ramen, and it was so incredibly satisfying. The most satisfying part? The tempura. That weirdly unique cheap-ass tempura that only comes in cup ramen was mind blowing.

So I got to thinking: It'd been a long time since I'd had tempura, so if the cheap kind that came with cup ramen tasted that good, how good would a freshly fried helping taste?

Once that thought got into my head, I just couldn't stand it and decided right then and there to make tempura.

So, the most important thing was exactly what I'd be making tempura out of. Personally, I wanted to focus on Alban's vegetables.

It was unfortunate that I had no seafood, since the stuff I got from Berleand had long since run out. I considered buying shrimp from my Online Supermarket, but I could see that causing unnecessary trouble, so I had to give up on the idea, no matter how hard it was. My familiars had just gone out on a hunting session today, and if they ate anything from my world they might insist on having it again.

So I decided on vegetables.

Still, that wouldn't fly with Fel and the others, who loved meat.

I decided to make not-chicken tempura using cockatrice and not-pork tempura using orc meat for them.

I was so looking forward to it that I ended up buying everything I needed with my skill on the spot.

"And so~... I'm going to make tempura!" I declared, so excited that I tried imitating a certain media personality.

First, prepare the meat.

Cut the cockatrice roughly into appropriately-sized round shapes, then season it with soy sauce, cooking sake, grated garlic, grated ginger, and salt and pepper. Make sure to massage the flavors into the meat.

Slice the orc thinly, and season with soy sauce, sake, and grated ginger. Massage the flavors in for that, too.

Grated garlic and ginger from a tube would work fine for this, but since I was being particular about flavor this time anyway, I decided to manually grate the ginger and garlic.

After the meat, I moved on to Alban's vegetables.

I picked eggplants, onions, carrots, squash, and sweet potatoes to for this.

For the eggplant, cut off the green part and, after slicing it vertically into fourths, start scoring the pieces while leaving 1.5cm of space on either side. Plate them in a fan shape.

Cut the onions into discs, and the carrots into sticks.

For the squash, remove the seeds and pulp before cutting the remaining meat into pieces 5mm thick. The squash was hard, but Sui's special mithril knife cut through it like butter.

After thoroughly washing the sweet potatoes, cut them into discs about 1cm thick while leaving the skin on. Then soak them in water to remove any unwanted substances.

With all the ingredients to be fried prepared, next was the batter.

Since I was making tempura, I bought something else with my skill: tempura flour from a brand I often used. It allowed you to make nice and crispy tempura without any complicated steps, so I'd always relied on it. No matter what anyone said about it, this tempura flour allowed even an amateur like me to make crisp and deliciously light tempura that tasted close to what was sold in restaurants.

I mixed the tempura flour with some water to finish the batter. All that was left was to fry the food.

"Good. The oil's at a perfect temperature too." The frying oil I was using was a 7:3 mix of canola oil and sesame oil. Mixing it that way would impart the lightness of the canola oil and the savoriness of the sesame oil into the food. It was a perfect mixture for making tempura.

That was all just stuff I read on the internet, but it turned out to be right when I actually tried it out. Since then, I always used this mixture when making tempura.

Since the meat was seasoned, I prepared separate batches of oil for the meat and the vegetables.

I'll start with the vegetables for a taste test.

I fried an eggplant, dipped it in sauce, and ate it.

“Ow, hot! But it’s so crispy because it was just fried.” The crispiness of freshly fried tempura and the sweetness of the eggplant was to die for.

Let's try some carrot too.

I had put the carrots into a bowl and sprinkled tempura flour on top of them ahead of time so they’d be easier to handle all at once. Then I shook off the excess flour and mixed them quickly in the batter.

Next, I used a spoon to lower them into the oil.

Ohh. The orange color is so vivid. This is nice on the eyes too.

I seasoned it with a little seaweed salt and ate some.

Hmmm... The Alban brand carrots are pretty sweet, I feel. This is great.

I wanted to keep eating, but the trio of gluttony was waiting for me. They’d get angry if I made them wait too long, so I decided to just start cooking in earnest. I fried up a moderate amount of vegetables for me, and a ton of meat for them.



“Whew~. This should do it.” After I finished frying up a mountain of cockatrice and orc tempura, it was time to bring everyone their meals.

“Dinner’s ready~!”

The gluttonous trio had been waiting with bated breath in the living room, and gathered around me immediately when I announced that.

《**You kept us waiting.**》

《Finally~!》

《Sui is so hungry~!》

“Yeah, yeah, sorry for the wait,” I said, placing plates piled high with cockatrice and orc tempura in front of them.

《Is this karaage?》

“No, no, it’s not.”

《It looks similar. Are you sure it isn’t?》

《It’s not karaage?》

My familiars seemed to think that the cockatrice and orc tempura were karaage.

The cockatrice I can kind of understand, but the orc is sliced so thin, isn’t it obvious it’s different at a glance?

“This is tempura. It’s fried like karaage, but it’s a different dish. You all have tempura made from cockatrice and orc. I seasoned them before frying, so they should be pretty good even when eaten alone.”

After hearing that, the gluttonous trio all started scarfing down the food.

《Ohh... It is crisp. The texture is great.》

《Yeah, and the breading on the outside is so light!》

《It smells so savory too! This is delicious!》

“Right? Tempura is great, isn’t it?”

I watched everyone chow down while I enjoyed my own vegetable tempura.

I’ve tried the eggplant and carrot, but how’s the onion?

“Ohh, this is good too. I just love the sweetness of onions. It goes great with the sauce too.” *How’re the squash and sweet potato?*

“Wooahh~! The breading is so crisp and the insides are so warm and fluffy~!”

I’d prepared both tempura sauce and seaweed salt to season the vegetable tempura, and both were great with the stuff.

But the trio of gluttony didn't even give the vegetable tempura a glance. I couldn't help but laugh bitterly at that fact as the demands for more started rolling in.

Vegetables are delicious, though.

It'd been a long time since I'd last eaten any, so I enjoyed my vegetable tempura just as much as my familiars did their meat tempura.

The Disappointing Goddess' Badgering

I was out of flour, so I went onto my Online Supermarket to buy some more, but...

"Crap. I messed up."

The kind I actually wanted was pastry flour for use in frying things. I mistakenly bought hard flour used for bread.

"Oof... What should I do...? This is for bread and stuff, right? Maybe I should just give it to Thereza?" I considered that as I looked at the package of flour in front of me, and...

"Hm? What's this?"

I noticed a sticker on the package that read, "A delicious recipe for you!" The bottom right of the sticker had a little section that said, "Flip this up!" So I did what it said, and...

"Hmmm? 'A red bean bun recipe everyone will love?'"

<R-Red bean bun?!>

...Is it just me, or did I just hear a voice I shouldn't be hearing?

"Handmade red bean buns sound good, but it looks like it takes a long time for the bread to prove and it seems like a lot of work. Guess this is a bust."

<No! Make it! And give it to meeeee!>

Demiurge is going to get mad at you, you know?

<Grah...>

I'll tell on you if you keep being selfish like this. And besides, if you don't stop handing down oracles like this, Demiurge will notice.

<Grrrrr... But I want to eat it~! I want some freshly baked red bean buns~! Couldn't you please find it in your heart to make some? Pleeaaaaassee~?>

True to her disappointing wont, Ninrir started wheedling and begging me.

Hmm... What should I do?

<Pleeaaaaassee. I'm begging you~!>

Well, if you go that far... She did give me her blessing, and I'm not completely heartless... The recipe is a lot of work, but I do kind of want to try freshly-baked red bean buns too... I guess it's fine. And I can use them as snacks for Fel and the others.

<Y-You'll make it? You'll really make it!?!>

"Oh, alright. I'll make some."

<Yayyyy! Thank you! Yesss, I get freshly baked red bean buns!>

As soon as I declared that I'd do it, Ninrir cheered really intensely.

<Hmhm~, H-hmm~, red bean buns, red bean buns, freshly baked red bean buns~♪>

She even went so far as to start humming a tune.

A little exasperated, I sat and waited to see how she would act, and...

<Wh-When the buns are done you give me a call, okay? It's a promise, okay~?>

...This damn disappointing goddess.



"Okay, this should do it for the first step."

I immediately started to get ready to make the red bean buns, buying all the ingredients the recipe called for through my Online Supermarket.

In a bowl, mix together the flour, dry yeast, sugar, skim milk, and salt. Then, add some eggs that have been warmed to room temperature and lukewarm

water and continue mixing until the dough loses any powderiness.

“It’s kind of soft and sticky, but that’s apparently fine for this stage according to the recipe? And... I need to take this and put it on the table...”

At this step, the important thing was to just knead as thoroughly as possible.

Once the stickiness has been kneaded out of the dough, add in some room temperature unsalted butter and resume kneading. Fold the dough, knead it, stretch it, and knead it some more before pounding and going back to kneading. Basically, just alternate methods to make sure the dough is thoroughly mixed.

Once the dough takes on a sheen, check to see if it’s done by stretching it into a thin membrane. If it doesn’t break when stretched this thinly, then the kneading is done.

Gather the dough into a round ball and put it in a bowl. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let the dough prove until it’s doubled in size.

While the dough was proving, I took a break with some coffee.

The trio of gluttony was outside sunbathing. I thanked my lucky stars that the weather was good. If they’d stayed close, they’d definitely have figured out that I was making something and would have never shut up about it. *Well, they’ll probably figure it out by the smell anyway once I start baking it and come flying over.*

After some time, when the first prove is done, gently push the dough to expel the gas inside it. Put the dough on a surface that’s been lightly dusted with flour, and separate the dough into balls of a good size for your planned bun.

Gently wrap the dough so it doesn’t dry out and let it rest for around 15 minutes.

Once that’s done, it’s time to shape them.

Lightly squish each dough ball into a flat shape on your palm before using a spoon to scoop some red bean paste filling onto the middle of the dough and closing it up. Make sure to pinch the opening of the dough closed firmly.

As an aside, I decided to use smooth red bean paste this time. Since the bakery I frequented used smooth paste for their buns, I just kind of felt like it.

At any rate, once the final balls are formed, wrap them up gently and line up the dough balls on a tabletop with baking paper on it. Leave them there for a second prove.

Once the balls double in size, the second prove is done. Remove the wrapping and paint on an egg wash for some gloss and sprinkle black sesame seeds on top.

The only step left is to preheat the oven and start baking.

“Whew~. Now I just have to wait for them to bake.”

After a while, the smell of baking red bean buns started to fill the air.

When that happened...

《**Hey, what are you making?**》

《Oh man, what’s this? Is that somethin’ good I smell~?》

《It smells nice~!》

Of course, the trio of gluttony all appeared in the kitchen.

“I’m making red bean buns. Ninrir asked for them.”

《**Mm... an offering?**》

《Whaaat~? But what about us?》

《Awww, Sui wants some too~...》

“Don’t worry, I’ve prepared some for you three too,” I said.

Fel reacted with a short, 《**I see,**》 but his tail was waving furiously. Dora-chan and Sui were both visibly happy, cheering, 《Yayyy!》

“I’ll bring them out when they’re done and cooled, so just wait in the living room,” I told them, and the gluttonous trio dispersed.

While I was at it, I wanted to also share some with my workers (slaves), so I’d actually prepared enough dough that it should be enough, but I had some doubts about something else.

“This is made entirely with ingredients from my Online Supermarket, isn’t it...?”

I was worried about the fact that there wasn't a single ingredient from this world. It was made from beginning to end with products from my world.

Which meant that there was a possibility that it would super buff the eater's stats.

Unable to shake my doubts, I decided to appraise the first set of red bean buns I'd ever made, which had come out beautifully.

【Red Bean Bun】

A red bean bun made with ingredients from another world.

Increases HP by 5% for 30 minutes.

"Oh wow, this is..."

While the buff wasn't ridiculous, it wasn't exactly negligible either.

"I kind of feel sorry for doing it, but it looks like I'll have to hold off on giving these to my workers."

I even used both my portable oven and the oven in the kitchen to make so many. Oh well. As for Fel and the others, I bet it'll be useless to tell them not to eat it, so I guess I'll just have to limit the amount they get as much as possible.

"It's still a little hot, but this should be fine."

Before that, though, these are the first red bean buns I've ever made. So a taste test would be...

"Ohh, delicious. It's totally a red bean bun. Plus it's got that freshly baked scent, and the bun itself is still kind of warm. It's not just 'not bad,' it's actually really good."

I was really happy that it turned out so well, despite it being my first go at the recipe.

So I plated the red bean buns thinking that ten would be more than enough even for a goddess. *In fact, it might be a little much.*

Then, I called out to her, "Ninrir, the red bean buns are ready~!"

<Ohh! Finally! I've been waiting~!>

“Please accept them.”

<I will~!> Came her reply, and the snacks disappeared in some faint light.
<Hm, I only get this many?>

“‘This many?’ There’s ten of them! How many were you planning to eat...?” I replied, slightly exasperated.

Then came a slightly panicked voice in my head, <I-I don’t eat ten at once!> It sounded like nothing but an excuse.

Yeah, eating ten at once would be impossible.

<Grk! ...A-Anyway, I’m only eating one. Om... Moohohhhh! It’s still a little warm, this bun is so delicious! It’s soft and chewy, and the sweet red bean paste pairs really well with the bun!>

I could hear Ninrir talk excitedly.

<H-Hey, on second thought, I could go...>

“You’ll get fat again.”

<Aaack! I-I’m fine, I tell you! If I say I’m fine then I’m totally fiiiiiiine!>

I heard the snapping sound of communications being cut right after she had the final word in the discussion.

“Looks like she’s gone. Still, she was really affected by that fat line... So goddesses really can get fat?”

I guess that’s just a matter of course, given how much she was having. She might be able to do something about it with her goddess powers, but there’s no doubt she should hold back at least a little from now on, I thought as I brought out the red bean buns to Fel and the others.

Right afterward, I told my familiars, “You only get three each,” which incited furious protests from the gluttonous trio.

Chilled Udon

《Even though it’s a bit better thanks to Fel’s magic, I never thought we’d be back here again...》

“Yeah. For sure...” I replied to Dora-chan while wiping off the sweat that had beaded on my brow with a towel.

《**You should have just refused. Thanks to you all tagging along, I cannot maintain a comfortable atmosphere. This magic is hard to control already with just me to cool,**》 Fel complained with a sour look.

While it wasn't exactly cool and comfortable, Fel's magic was taking a huge bite out of the heat in the area.

Well, there's no choice but to rely on you, Fel, so do your best.

We were currently in the great Perales forest area, a place in the midwestern area of Leonhardt that bordered the collection of small states. This was a place we'd been to before on a request.

Of course, we were on a request this time as well. If we weren't, we'd never go anywhere near a place like this, after all.

Also, the person who made the request was apparently the same noble as last time.

That noble's hobby was collecting insect monsters as samples. Last time we were here, it was to capture a sample of an endemic species, the morphium butterfly. It was an annoying little thing, so the request was considered high difficulty. It seemed that noble was so happy with our performance that he asked for us again.

Willem, the guildmaster of Karelina's Adventurer's guild, even begged me to accept, saying, “Just this once,” so I couldn't refuse.

Still, I had to make sure this wouldn't happen again, so I said, “Just this once. ONCE. Okay?”

I wouldn't be able to deal with that noble bothering me with his hobby all the time.

According to the guildmaster, we didn't have to worry about that, though.

From what he told me, the noble's wife found out about his hobby too, and was really mad about it.

However, taking back a request once issued would impact a noble's dignity, so

this one request was allowed to stand. Though it was implied that the next one would have consequences.

After hearing that, I was a little relieved.

At any rate, given the noble lady's anger, it seemed pretty safe to assume this would be the last time. So we once again set out to the ridiculously sweltering jungles.

The request this time was to capture a golden beetle, which was a rhinoceros beetle about the size of my palm.

It was also an endemic species of this Perales forest, just like the morphium butterfly, and was also very rare and low in number, so they had a lot of fans.

Since that was the case, there was no way we would find one right away, and we ended up having to go deep into the area.

The most annoying thing, though, were the characteristics of the golden beetle.

The golden beetle was more defensive than aggressive, and despite its small size its exoskeleton was hard enough to withstand attacks from an A-ranked monster. While that wasn't really a problem for us, the real annoying part was how sharp its ability to sense presences was.

Fel had sensed a couple presences that seemed to be what we were looking for on the way to where we were, but whenever we moved to capture them they always ran away before we got there. This happened twice.

So, the course of action we decided on was...

《**There,**》 Fel said through telepathy.

Since it would run if we came too close, it was decided that Fel would warn us once we were barely outside the range of its perception.

I looked over, following Fel's line of sight. 《So that's it...》 My eyesight must have gotten better thanks to my levels, since I could see through the various trees to spot a small golden dot in the distance.

《Now, as we talked about, you three wait here.》

《Indeed.》

《You got it.》

《Okay~!》

I walked forward alone toward the golden beetle.

Since the golden beetle would run away whenever it detected someone strong, after some consultation with everyone it was decided that I, the weakest of the group (It's sad but it's true. Haha), would go and try to catch it.

I snuck toward it as best I could.

The golden beetle was occupied with sucking tree sap, and hadn't noticed me.

Or rather, it might have just not thought that I was a threat.

At any rate, I reached out my hands quietly...

"Got ya!"

I grabbed hold of the golden beetle, peeled it off the tree, and tossed it into a bag I had ready.

《**Good job! It seems your weakness has paid off for once.**》

《We've finally got one! Now we can leave this awful forest!》

《Yayyy!》

They all congratulated me when I regrouped with them.

Though Fel's remark about my weakness being useful wasn't welcome. It's true that I'm weak...

At any rate, now that we had our prey...

"Let's hurry home."

We immediately made to leave the jungle.



《**We should almost be out of the forest.**》 The vegetation had gotten much thinner.

《I'm pretty hungry...》

《Sui is too~!》

《**Indeed. Let us eat.**》

“Yeah, we did end up moving around a lot in this forest looking for that thing... Let’s just eat now.”

And so, it was suddenly time for a meal. Since it was so hot, I wanted to make something as cool and soothing as possible.

With that in mind, I remembered the meat soboro I had premade in my Item Box.

“I have this, so I can make some chilled udon with lots of meat soboro.”

With that decided, the first thing to do was go shopping. For chilled udon, I’d need mentsuyu and hot spring eggs.

Once I finished my shopping, I first started with cutting up the vegetables for the garnish.

I took some Alban brand cucumbers and cut them into strips, and I also cut some likewise Alban brand tomatoes into wedges.

Once that’s done, boil the frozen udon (Frozen udon is great since it cooks in such a short time. It’d be even easier with a microwave, though) before washing the udon in ice water until it shrinks up.

After that, drain the extra water from the udon before plating it and top with lots of the orc and bloody horn-bull meat soboro. Place the cucumber and tomato garnish on the side of the plate for color.

Lastly, make a small crater in the middle of all the udon and meat soboro and add the hot spring egg inside with some mentsuyu on top of that...

“The chilled udon with lots of meat soboro is done!” I only noticed after serving the food to everyone, but udon might be difficult for them to eat.

But, as if to say that all my worries were stupid, they all started chowing down with no problems.

“How is it?”

《**Hm, not bad.**》

《It's cold, so it feels real nice in this heat.》

《It's cold and there's lots of meat so it's really good~!》

The reviews were good.

I started eating myself.

Slrrrrrrrrp

Yeah. It's nice and refreshing.

There was a lot of meat soboro too, so it didn't fall short in how filling it was either. The crunchy cucumber and the slightly sour tomatoes went well with the main part of the dish too.

《**More. I do not need any vegetables. Just give me the meat and the egg.**》

《Give me the same!》

《Sui too!》

“What, why? It's just garnish so there isn't even that much on the plate.”

《**Hmph. Vegetables are unnecessary. It will be much better with just meat and eggs,**》 Fel declared, and Dora-chan and Sui nodded in agreement.

Awwww what? But vegetables go so well with the cold udon.

These damn carnivores...

The Parents' Worries

Mukohda and his party had left for the meat dungeon, leaving his mansion without its owner...

As for the servants' (slaves') quarters behind the main house, breakfast was lively as usual.

“Hey, hey! Sit down quickly and eat!” Thereza rushed everyone to their seats, sounding for all the world like a plucky mother.

“Hey, wait a second! Barthel! Please don't start drinking in the morning! The kids are watching!” The one who scolded the dwarf was the energetic Aija, completely recovered from her illness.

As the two who were responsible for all the workers' meals, Thereza and Aija were busy right from the start of the day.

The menu for this morning was the standard sunny side up eggs, bread baked by Thereza in the stone oven, and soup made with lots of Alban's vegetables and some cockatrice meat.

Once everyone had taken their seats they started eating.

As a side note, the table and chairs they were using were all things that Mukohda had made with Earth magic for a dinner party he'd hosted. They were all left behind and the slaves were using them.

So long as the weather wasn't rainy, everyone would regularly eat breakfast and lunch there.

For dinner, Thereza and Aija would deliver the food they made to each house for those living there to eat in their own families or groups.

At any rate, this morning's breakfast was no different from any in the past, but there was one small girl who was frowning with an unsatisfied expression.

"Aww, why isn't there more meat~?"

"There's meat in the soup."

"Yeaahhh... but it doesn't feel like it when there's so little..."

"If you don't like it you don't have to eat it, Lotte." Thereza, plucky as always, retorted to the complaining girl.

"I'll eat it. Mneeehhh!"

Lotte's brother and the Alban family's first son, Oliver, smacked Lotte on the head after she said that while making a face.

"Stop being stupid and eat."

"Ow!! You dummy!"

"Alright, Lotte, it's time you stopped this right now!"

"Okaayyy~."

Lotte steadily ate all her food, even while complaining.

“Awww... It would’ve been great if we had like that ‘steak,’ or the ‘hamburg steak’ thing, or even that ‘ginger-fried pork’ thing... You think so too, right Erik?”

Lotte suddenly involved her other big brother and the Alban family’s second son, Erik.

“Sure, I love those things, but those’re all for dinner.”

“Whaaaaat? Whyyyy?”

“It’s because those things are all super delicious, like a feast, right? They taste better as a reward after a day of working hard.”

The adults all nodded in agreement.

“But if it’s a treat, then don’t you want to eat it all the time?”

Hearing that, both Oliver and Erik shrugged and shook their heads like they’d given up.

“*Sigh*~ How did this girl become so spoiled...?” Thereza heaved a sigh.

“We get eggs every day in the morning, too. Back in the village, this kind of luxury would never have been available.”

“Yeah. We never had any eggs back in those days...”

Thereza’s husband Alban, who was the father of Oliver, Erik, and Lotte, reminisced about the past.

“It was the same for us. I had eggs for the first time after coming here.”

Aija’s husband, Tony, agreed.

“And we only managed to get meat every once in a while.” Kosti, who was Tony and Aija’s son, chimed in.

Selja, who was his little sister and also the family’s eldest daughter agreed, saying, “Yeah, it was like once a month?”

“For us, whenever someone actually succeeded on their hunt, we only got a small pittance of a share. Now we get eggs every day, and meat too.”

“And we get to eat as much as we like, too.”

Alban and Thereza heaved a sigh.

“But the children have started taking this luxury for granted. I’m worried about that,” Thereza said.

Aija nodded, saying, “Us too.”

“It’ll be fine. We understand that it’s thanks to Mukohda that this is happening,” Oliver said. Erik, Kostj, and Selja all nodded.

“Being a parent is tough, isn’t it?”

“Yeah... So just stop worrying about all that and eat while you can!” Luke and Irvine, nicknamed the idiot twins of the adventurer group, had listened in on the parents’ worrying and chimed in without a care.

“You two can just shut up.” Their sister, Tabatha, thumped them on the heads as she retorted.

“Personally, I think it’s fine as long as they understand this is all thanks to Mukohda.”

“Yeah. As long as they understand that, it shouldn’t be a problem if they think this is natural. They just need to keep that part in mind,” Barthel, a dwarf in the adventuring group, added his agreement as well.

“You’ve been plying Mukohda for alcohol all the time too, Barthel. You make sure to thank him for all that.”

“Yeah! The alcohol we get to drink here is way better than anything you’ll find anywhere else, after all.” The idiot twins started teasing Barthel.

“I know that already! I’m always grateful to Mukohda! I’ve already decided to spend my entire life serving him. Nothing could make me leave,” Barthel declared in a huff.

His swelteringly passionate enthusiasm caused the entire table to laugh.

“I’m the most worried about Lotte, though.”

“Yeah, she’s young after all.” Alban and Thereza were the most worried about her because she was getting used to such luxury at such a young age.

“Hm? But Lotte knows all that?” Lotte said with egg yolk staining the edges of

her mouth before suddenly standing up.

Then...

“Thanks, big brother Mukohdaaaa! Please come back with lots of meat!” She shouted with a smile. Alban and Thereza’s shoulders slumped as they heaved a heavy sigh.

Meanwhile, Mukohda...

“Ahh.. Ahhh... Ahhchoooo!”

《**What? Why are you sneezing?**》

“I just really needed to all of a sudden.”

《Anyway, let’s hurry forward! This dungeon’s gonna be a buffet of meat!》

《Meeeeaaaat!》

“I need to get souvenirs for everyone waiting at home, so yeah, let’s go.”

《**We will hunt all we can.**》

“No, no, we don’t need that much, okay!”

Tempura Rice Bowls with Extra Extra Meat

《**What are we having for dinner tonight?**》 Fel asked while we were spending time as each of us liked in the living room. He must have been hungry.

“Great of you to ask. You see, I’m thinking we’ll have tempura rice bowls today.”

《《《Tempura rice bowls?》》》》

Dora-chan and Sui must have also been interested in what was on the menu, since they reacted along with Fel.

“Oh, right. I’ve made a lot of different rice bowls, but I’ve never made this one before, have I?”

《**Something we have never tried, is it? Interesting.**》

《Ohh~? I’m looking forward to it.》

《Yeahh~!》

“Well, we’re just going to be eating the tempura we made before though,” I clarified, and my familiars seemed a little disappointed.

《**Oh, what? You are just going to use something you made before?**》

《You’re cuttin’ corners man.》

《Everything master makes is delicious, but Sui would like something new...》

“Tsk tsk tsk. Now, now, don’t just go assuming that tempura and tempura rice bowls are the same thing. They’re different, get it? But seeing is believing. I’m gonna go get started on it, so just wait,” I explained to the gluttonous trio before going to the kitchen.

Then...

While I’d made the tempura beforehand, I’d stored them in my Item Box fresh from the fryer, so they were still nice and hot. So, I got to making the sauce.

Throw some water, soy sauce, mirin, sugar, and Japanese-style dashi into a pot and turn on the heat. Once the alcohol in the mirin is cooked away and the mixture has thickened a little, it’s done.

“Okay, once the sauce is done, I just have to take the freshly steamed rice from my Item Box and form it in a bowl...”

The clay pot I retrieved from my Item Box was filled with plump and smooth grains of freshly steamed rice. They positively shined in their whiteness.

I packed the rice into my familiar’s personal bowls. There were small crunchy burnt bits too, so it would be really appetizing.

I poured a little of the sauce I made over the rice and let it soak in. The salty-sweet sauce would make it even better.

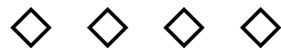
After that, I poured some of the sauce on top of the not-chicken but cockatrice tempura and the not-pork but orc tempura that I’d made, and piled them high on the rice.

“Great! And that’s the special extra extra meat tempura bowl finished!”

By the way, for mine I had eggplant, onion, carrot, squash, and sweet potato

as the focus of my tempura. The cockatrice and the orc were just a token presence. I had to make it that way, since if I insisted on the same meat portions as Fel and the others I'd be assaulted with terrible stomach pain afterwards, especially since the meat would probably sit really heavy in my stomach.

Anyway, I should take this food out to my starving familiars who're waiting outside, I guess.



“Here you go. It’s a special extra extra meat tempura bowl.”

I put the bowls in front of my familiars. The sight of the pile of meat was really imposing.

《**Oh? So this is what you call a tempura bowl.**》

《Alright, I’mma take my time with this. Let’s see if you really did cut any corners, shall we?》

《Wowww~ so much meat!》

“It’s got a different taste from the tempura you guys had before. It’s really good!”

Everyone started chowing down.

Good, good. Rice bowls are meant to be eaten enthusiastically like that. I should eat too. Starting with this eggplant. Mmmm~! The sweet and savory sauce is to die for! Eating tempura with tempura dip or with salt is nice, but this sauce in a tempura rice bowl is just as great.

《**More.**》

《Me too.》

《Sui too!》

My familiars had finished off their bowls really quick.

“How was it?”

《**Well, it was not bad.**》

《Yeah. I like that it had a different taste from the tempura we had before.》

《It's great~!》

“Right? Tempura bowls are delicious things. The sweet and savory sauce on the tempura and the rice brings it all together. It's just the best. Like this,” I said, stuffing my face full of tempura rice bowl as an example.

The sweetness of the vegetable tempura along with the sweet and savory sauce soaked into the rice went together perfectly. The taste was exquisite.

As I was enjoying my tempura rice bowl...

《**Hey!**》

《We asked for more. Don't just sit there eating on your own!》

《Masterrrr, give us more!》

Whoops. I forgot.

“Sure, sure. Extra helpings. Got it.”

I took the extra serving rice bowls I'd already made and stored in my Item Box and put them in front of them.

Of course, they were piled high with meat.

And the three of them all started eating with gusto again.

Seriously though, I get that they like meat but don't they ever get tired of having nothing else? Actually, before that, I fried those in oil so they should have a pretty big impact...

With that in mind, I tried offering them other stuff, saying, “I have vegetable tempura too. Want any?” But I was flatly refused.

Why though? Vegetable tempura is great.

While I was busy worrying about their health, the trio of gluttony was beside me eating bowl after bowl of food like calories weren't even a thing.

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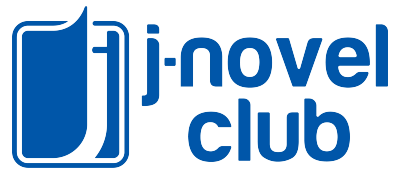
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Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill: Volume 9

by Ren Eguchi

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